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PADDOCK PERSONALITIES

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PADDOCK PERSONALITIES


Being Thirty Years' Turf Memories

by
J. FAIRFAX-BLAKEBOROUGH, M.C.

With an Introduction by
THE MOST HON. THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND
P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., F.B.A.

With 17 Illustrations

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AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

IN the following pages will be found personal memories and impressions of jockeys, trainers and others with whom I have had close contact during my varied career on the Turf during the past thirty years. It was originally intended to include pen portraits, reminiscences and biographical details of owners, racing officials and others who go to make up the great and ever-changing Turf army. By the time I had come to the end of my recollections of trainers, however, I found that this book had exceeded the usual length of such volumes. The remainder of those who in vastly different spheres are, or have been, "Paddock Personalities" during the epoch with which I am so familiar, will be "kept" and "readied" for another volume of similar memories. I feel convinced that as a mirror of a most interesting period of racing history, as a biographical and statistical record, this volume and its successor will prove valuable books of reference, having at the same time, the merit of being readable and of reviving pleasant memories of the merry past when all the world was young and all the trees were green.

J. FAIRFAX-BLAKEBOROUGH

GROVE HOUSE,
NORTON-ON-TEES.



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INTRODUCTION

by

THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND, P.C., G.C.S.I.,
G.C.I.E., F.B.A.

HORSE racing, which at one time might legitimately have been described as the pastime of the few, is, nowadays, the business of a very large public with ramifications in every stratum of society and with patrons in every walk of life. The number of owners and trainers has, indeed, increased prodigiously in recent years, the ranks of the former, in particular, having enjoyed a sudden and unforeseen accession of strength when, after the war, ladies, who until that time had, for the most part, been content to participate in the sport as spectators only, took their courage in both hands and registered themselves as owners of race-horses. Some of them have even wished to hold licences as trainers or jockeys, a concession the Jockey Club have not yet thought either wise or expedient, whatever may be the scope given by certain ruling bodies of the Turf in other countries. The very few ladies who actually owned horses in earlier days did so diffidently and under disguise, prior to assumed names being banned by the Jockey Club. There was, for example, "Mr. Jersey," who figured prominently in the Racing Calendar of that rapidly receding epoch which we speak

of as "before the war," known to all others than Turf patrons as Mrs. Langtry. There was also "Mr. Manton," a name which ill-concealed the identity of the Duchess of Montrose. Her Grace registered her scarlet jacket so long ago as 1883.

In the earlier days those who followed the Turf knew the names, the colours, and most of what there is to be known about pretty well all its patrons—its owners, its trainers and its jockeys—for they were comparatively few in number. Not so the race-goers of the present generation. How often, indeed, does one hear such questions as: "Who is so-and-so, who won such and such a race?" or "Whose colours are those?" And no wonder! Colours that were known to everyone who went racing a generation ago are all but swamped in an ocean of Turf liveries containing every combination and permutation of the simpler forms of racing jacket that sufficed for the needs of earlier days.

In these circumstances, a book such as *Paddock Personalities* is a real need, and the enterprise and energy of the author in compiling this, the first of two volumes giving intimate and biographical details regarding those who are playing an active part, or whose names have, in recent years, loomed large, in the mighty and ever-changing Turf army, will surely meet with the grateful recognition of the racing public. Major Fairfax-Blakeborough's knowledge of Turf history is extensive, as all who are familiar with his many books know, and no one is more competent to write such a volume as this on trainers and jockeys, or the companion volume on owners and Turf officials which is to follow in due course. Those in quest of information concerning those who,

to-day, maintain the tremendous business of the Turf, may consult these volumes in the confident expectation that what they seek will there be found. And no higher recommendation can be given than that.

ZETLAND.

PADDOCK PERSONALITIES

CHAPTER I

MEMORIES OF TRAINING STABLES

“**T**OSS that away ; it’s as much as ever *you* can do to ride with your hands !” This withering remark was made to me one April morning in 1904, just after I had mounted a ’chaser in the yard at the Hambleton training stables prior to going out to exercise and to ride “a school.” I was as proud as a dog with two tails up to the point of this snub and was buoyed up with all the confidence and assurance (not bad possessions in horsemen after all !) of ingenuous youth. I had in my hand a little cane—“cosh” is the term for it amongst those behind the scenes of the Turf—which I always carried when hacking, and, seeing this, Bob Adams gave the command with which I have opened. Now Bob Adams was allowed to be one of the best horsemen of his day in Yorkshire—a county which has produced so many great equestrians both in the hunting field and on the Turf. Bob was a wonderful man all round ; equally as good to hounds as he was in a steeplechase, equally clever on the flat, just as accomplished with green horses or made horses, those easy to ride, or those which had earned the reputation of being “mad-brained devils.” He had been the close friend of the great, if misguided, “Squire Abington” Baird, had won hundreds of races in the bad old days when there was a good deal of rough and tumble, hooliganism and foul riding allowed (or at any rate winked at) amongst jockeys. This was particularly the case at small country jumping meetings

at which it was not always the best, or even the luckiest, horses which won, but the jockey who had the least fear, and who by voice and bellicose actions could instil most fear into those he had to beat.

I was only just of age, this was my first actual practical contact with the Turf, and at the very outset I was made to feel very small beer by one of my idols. I had placed Bob Adams on a pinnacle, I looked upon him as a sort of superman and revered him with that awe which young men and maidens (more than old men and children) feel towards those who have made a name and fame for themselves in silk or scarlet, or on the stage. It is strange, but those reared in an atmosphere of sport, those with a country heart and an inherent affection for horse, hound, and that world in which they stand out as cameos, place huntsmen and horsemen who have earned reputations for themselves on a much higher plane in their estimate of human values than they do statesmen, lawyers, artists and men of letters. Of course, Fred Archer once told a great Harley Street specialist (who had never heard of him): "I am in *my* profession, what *you* are in yours." And so it was; and so it is! In both connections our idols are artists, skilful scientists, men of abundant experience, who have by reason of these qualities been singled out from amongst their fellows and brought into the limelight at the very top of the tree. No one spasmodic effort can do this for jockeys—no single race with a whirlwind finish in which the winning jockey displays consummate brains and judgment, no single great run with hounds, in which the huntsman exhibits an almost uncanny knowledge of the mind, the run, and intentions of a sinking and twisting fox—establishes the huntsman's reputation. A Statesman may make a name with one speech, a lawyer with one case, an artist with a single picture, an author with an isolated book. It is otherwise with a jockey or a huntsman. As conceited Mr. Bragg said: "A huntsman's reputation rises and falls with the sport he shows." So is it also with a jockey. His popularity, his patrons, the cheers of the crowd and the worshippers at his shrine, ebb and flow according to the number of winners he

rides. He must live up to his pedestal, or that pedestal soon falls and he with it.

In the case of Bob Adams, his riding-in-public days were just at an end, but there was still much of the old fire, dash, and courage, and all the admirable skill in the saddle left. This, too, despite the fact that he had lived every minute of his life, had denied himself none of its good things (except smoking), and was as fond of a long drink as any man. Perhaps the secret of his physical fitness was the same to which Tom Bruckshaw attributed his long life. Neither man resorted to physic or Turkish baths to keep down their weight. They relied upon hard work in stables and plenty of walking exercise rather than artificial means which play such havoc with many jockeys who are constantly waging a war with nature and trying to ride lighter than they really should. Bob was a great schoolmaster for a young man full of confidence and maybe just a little self-satisfied as to his equestrian prowess. He put such youths as myself in our proper place in the handicap, and if he encouraged when occasion admitted, he was at the same time such an outspoken and severe critic that he humbled us and from the outset gave us to understand that no matter how long we had ridden, or how much hunting we had had, we had everything to learn about racing and race-riding, the ways of training stables, and in taking part in home gallops and schools. In all those fascinating matters and accomplishments we were placed (and made to feel) at the very bottom of the kindergarten class. The sooner we realised and accepted this, the sooner we accepted Bob's estimate of us, the better it was for our advancement in learning. No one was long able to retain a swelled head if they placed themselves under his mentorship with a real desire to become proficient.

I have always been grateful for the privilege of having had him and his brothers, Jim and David, as my first Turf tutors. They had no other interest in life except horses and racing. They had never had any other interest. Reared in a Turf atmosphere from childhood, they were single-eyed and single-minded. Almost from their cradles up they had ridden, and ridden in races ere

they were in their teens. They came of a long line of "horsey" ancestors, and they drank in love and lore of horse, of riding and racing, with all the etceteras of amateur "vet" work (albeit some of the wiles of the old-time dealers), with their mother's milk. If ever there was anything in the theory of predestination, of inherent influence, surely these Yorkshire brothers were ordained, even in their pre-natal days, for the saddle and the race-course.

Their father—"Old Jim," as he was called—was one of the best-known horse dealers throughout the whole of the north countree; a man who always had a fast trotter and went the round of the fairs buying, selling and "swopping" hundreds of horses year by year, for many years, during his long life. For many of those years he always had a horse or two in training, sometimes in partnership with another dealer named Harry Brand. He lived to see the horse decline, the fairs become a mere apology compared with their one-time importance, and changes on the roads and in the towns which saddened him. He saw the trams and buses (for which he had bought hundreds of horses) become obsolete, he saw the introduction of the motor car—"the devil's carriages" as he called them—and he chafed at the evolution. Indeed, he came to feel that he had out-lived his generation.

I knew him well, had been to some of the northern horse fairs with him, had seen his long string (fastened head to tail) come into the fair with Gypsy "Fad" in charge, had heard him "haggle" and barter, had bought horses from him, and had learned much from him. All these were experiences which the young man of to-day can never enjoy, for the fairs have gone for ever, and the quaint characters who could "bishop," "fig" and all the rest of it, are dead. Their mould has been lost and we shall never see their like again.

Prior to 1904 I had been hunting four or five days a week from Carlton-in-Cleveland, where I had the vicarage as a hunting box. One day, after a long run with the Bilsdale Hounds, we found ourselves on the York and Ainsty side of the Hambleton Hills and called at the

Hotel for a meal and to give our horses a rest and feed. On the way home—about a twenty miles hack—we had to cross the low moor on which Jim Adams had his steeplechase schooling ground laid out. I was riding an Irish hunter which never turned his head at anything and, despite the hard run he had had and the long journey ahead, in the folly of my youth (possibly primed and accentuated by Hambleton Hotel jumping powder!), I rode over the dry ditch.

The horse made a great jump and it so happened the trainer was in the vicinity and saw it. He forthwith asked me if I would care to ride schooling occasionally at Hambleton. I was flattered, and to make a long story short was soon quartered at the Hambleton Hotel with my horses and before long had some jumpers in training there despite the warning of an old Quaker friend who shook his head and said: "John, thou wilt find that horses and money at interest both eat night and day." My initiation to the mysteries, the fascination and allurements of this phase of the behind the scenes of the Turf I have already described. This was but the first of many subsequent lessons which came in rapid succession to convince me that training and riding race-horses in their work was a science not to be learned rapidly; indeed one which is never fully and completely learned.

It was many years later that Mr. R. I. ("Bob") Robson remarked to me: "Just when a man is beginning to know a bit about horses and how to train them, he finds he's too old to stand the worry, and day and night anxiety of it all." Harking back to the opening sentence of this chapter, and incidentally to the vexed question of the use of whips in races, Fred Archer once told Bob Robson that he had lost more races through the use of the whip than the whip ever helped him to win. To the same Farnham (Knaresborough, Yorks) trainer the late John Porter once remarked when staying with him for York Races: "You have some wonderful gallops here, Robson, but I always say that I could train a *good* horse by the side of the road. It is the bad and bad-legged beggars which require so much attention. You north-country trainers can win races with them

when they have been parted with at Newmarket as useless."

After I took up my quarters at the historic training stables at Hambleton, high up on that wonderful range of hills above Thirsk, I "rode out" every morning with the string and not only attended morning and evening stables on non-hunting days, but "did" one (sometimes a couple) of my own horses. This was with a view to learning the art from A to Z, and also to make and keep myself fit. There is, I think, no exercise which produces such perfect physical condition as two hours' strapping morning and evening. I loved it, for there is an abiding satisfaction in standing back in a loose box after a horse has been "done" and is ready to be "sheeted up," and looking at one's own handiwork on what is the Almighty's most wonderful creation next to man—a thoroughbred horse!

There is a justifiable pride in the result of what is really hard work if it is done properly; work which calls for skill as well as brawn and muscle and, maybe, abundant patience. Not infrequently blood 'uns are so thin-coated, and have such sensitive skins that they are on the dance the whole time they are being dressed over. This, together with the (usually only playful) nips they will give if opportunity is given, calls for constant vigilance on the part of the lad who is doing them. If he combines understanding and patience with his vigilance, all is well. It is those mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, who yell at horses which are at all difficult to deal with, and who either tease or ill use them, who turn merely high-spirited animals into savages.

The late William P'Anson (who trained more winners on the flat than any man living or dead) often said to me: "It is too much corn and lads with no real horse love in them who make daft horses." My experience is that the average lad (they are still lads even when they're sixty!) in racing stables *does* take a pride in his work and does display intelligent and sympathetic understanding. I suppose there should be a similar pride and satisfaction in craftsmanship in whatever line of life a man is concerned, but somehow in many of them the immediate



THE HAMBLETON HILLS SHOWING "THE WHITE HORSE"

results are not so evident, nor is one's energy centred upon anything animate, or so beautiful as a thoroughbred horse in training—the aristocrat of his species!

Jim Adams was a great stickler for much vigorous wispig—real sledge-hammer work—to muscle horses up and I am sure that he was right. Indeed, I would say here and now, that during my long experience and intimate association with trainers and horse masters, I have never come across anyone more skilful, more painstaking and conscientious, than was and is, the Yorkshire trainer, James Adams. It is true that the *Racing Calendar* does not seem to substantiate this, but there is one phase of both training and jockeyship which not only the mere casual observer, but others with experience are slow to recognise. It is this: that there is often more credit to both trainer and jockey who can get bad horses so fit and ride them with such judgment that they finish second or third, than there is to the trainer and jockey who are jointly responsible for the winner passing the post first.

Adams did wonders with a lot of bad-legged horses and with lazy, sluggish animals which had previously consistently and persistently refused "to put it all in." During my three years with him he never entertained an angel unawares and never said that the moment had come to put the money down without his judgment being justified. In my day under his tuition, apart altogether from the hero worship of a young man for those he recognised as past masters in what is at once a great game and a great science, I had the profoundest admiration for the thoroughness of the trainer with whom I was so closely associated, for his skill, his judgment and the individual study he made of every horse under his care.

Often I heard him say that a dozen horses were as much as any one man could look after properly. When I first knew him he had many more than that, and it was obvious that from early morning till late at night they were his constant thought. He would lapse into lengthy silences, form book in hand, at night-time (as did the late Eddie de Mestre), and one knew that there was something

in the wind—some prospective coup in the near future. Apropos of his view on the number of horses a man can train to his own satisfaction and to do justice to his patrons, I more than once heard him argue out his theory thus :

“Supposing these big trainers with a string of maybe sixty or seventy horses in their boxes only spend three minutes night and morning with each animal, that would take three hours at morning stables and three hours at night. In addition they have much correspondence, many telegrams, the telephone going continuously, lots of owners bothering them by calling and expecting to be shown round and entertained, entries, forfeits and scratchings to attend to, the *Calendar* to study, the coming and going of horses to see to, and so on. No man living can do it all properly. They may have a good head man and they may have a good secretary, but a trainer cannot train such a string and be away frequently at meetings without some horses and some owners suffering.”

I have had reason in later years to realise that there is truth in all this, and that some horses get stowed away “in the bottom yard,” as being rather akin to nonentities which help the exchequer but are not given much thought as potential winners. Time and time again has one seen such horses come out and win races in which they were thought not to have “an earthly.” These are often cases of stables beating themselves to the satisfaction of no one, except the owner be one of those delightful people to train for who never have a bet. There are a few of them. Lord Derby is one, Lord Lonsdale is another, whilst Mr. John Johnstone of Lochmaben rarely had more than two shillings on one of his runners, and his limit was a pound. Such owners may always be safely congratulated when they have winners, but it is not always wise to offer such felicitations to trainers who have just seen fancied horses under their care beaten by one of their own “from the bottom yard,” which was not fancied one little bit and was merely having a public outing to please the owner.

Well, after this tangent, to revert to my days of thirty

years ago at Hambleton, we were rather at a disadvantage so far as training went as part of the ages old incomparable turf was owned by the late Sir Matthew Dodsworth, who in later life had become anti-racing. He had planted a belt of trees over what had been part of the ancient Hambleton race-course—"Black Hambleton" it was called in old Turf records—on which one of the most important race meetings in England was for long held. Until 1776 the King's Plate was run here, being then transferred alternately to York and Richmond. At Hambleton it used to be possible to get three miles straight, but this plantation and a boundary wall built right across the moor, put an end to this.

Successive Hambleton trainers—Wm. P'Anson, Tom Green, Jack Raisin, Ted Percy, Stewart Bell, Joe Vasey and others—had all been there after the wonderful days of the Heseltines' and Stebbings' and had been "warned off" the far (and best portion) of the moor. I fancy Vasey and company did as we did and, when particular occasion called for it, or when a change of ground—so important with some temperamental, "funky" and "tricky" animals—demanded it, went out ere the sun had risen above the top of those everlasting hills to do work on the forbidden ground.

There was always an added spice of interest attached to these extra-early mornings. Everyone knew what it meant as we stole out of the yard and rode across the first moor, through the gate in the wall, and did a canter or half-speed by the roundhills. We were off the moor long before the smoke was ascending from the chimney of the local custodian, who was, if my memory serves me aright, a local preacher amongst the nonconformists, so probably looked upon all of us connected with racing as bad, wicked men, doomed to perdition, and an unholy influence in the neighbourhood. Be this as it may, he must have had a shrewd suspicion that we did occasionally trespass on his employers' preserves, though such is the depth and springy character of Hambleton turf that traces of footprints—even those of galloping horses—left little impression, be the weather wet or fine, be it spring, summer, or winter.

Once on this forbidden ground we had a day-break trial and the particular horse which was being tried won a few days later by about as far as I ever saw an animal win on the flat. That clever jockey George McCall, then in his heyday, and with money to burn, rode the winner at Stockton and has often recalled the race to me since. I have vivid memories of it too, for the horse ran in my colours—heliotrope, mauve belt. I think these were described as “heliotrope mauve stripe” on the card. Anyway I was summoned into the weighing-room and I remember that the fear of God was upon me. In my youthful ignorance I imagined that the stewards were going to warn me off for life for some unknown offence, but it was only the clerk of the scales who wanted to point out the incorrect description of my racing jacket and to caution me in future to declare “belt” not “stripe.” “There’ll be no fine this time,” he added.

George McCall, like his contemporary “Tiny” Hep-
pell, had a man’s strength and experience with a boy’s weight. George often rode for us and was always quite agreeable to the conditions—that he received a present of £20 if he won. Certainly many of those for whom he rode gave him much more, but he always used to say that he found little men much more generous *pro rata*, and that he rode many winners for which he did not even get “thank you,” others for which handsome promises were made but never fulfilled.

There was another point about George apart from his strength, his judgment, and his perseverance to the bitter end on a lazy horse, and in this additional virtue he stood out from most of his generation. When he rode a horse for you which was not at the moment fancied, he could, and would, tell you something helpful as to whether it wasn’t quite the animal’s distance, or too far, or suggest that some other course would suit it better; that it was short of a gallop, inclined to “chuck it”; or the plain unvarnished truth that it was never likely to win a race.

So many other successful jockeys of thirty years ago—and it is even more so to-day—were either totally unable to give a coherent opinion, or they merely paused for a second as they dashed into the weighing-room, to say :

"He'll win you a race soon, not quite ready yet," or "I got off all right, but he couldn't quite get the trip." There were (and are) some who couldn't even say as much as this. I found most of the old school of jockeys either unwarrantable optimists, afraid to discourage owners, or lacking in judgment and power of observation both as to how a race had been run, and how the horse they had ridden had shaped. As I have said, many of the present generation are still less helpful, explicit or knowledgable. They don't seem to consider little men, with few rides to give, worth bothering about, and many of them get unbearably swelled-headed.

There is, of course, another side to the question. Some owners tackle jockeys before they have had time to get their breath after a ding-dong finish, and hold them up at the weighing-room door when they are anxious to get in to change and weigh for the next contest, or, if they are placed, to get to the scale. Clerks of scales—and rightly so—come down sharply upon jockeys who have been in the first four if they do not come immediately to scale. Not only does delay to gossip with owners hold everything up, but is also against the spirit and intention of the rule which says that no one must touch a jockey or his equipment on his way to the scale after a race. This rule was made because of many proved instances of jockeys being handed lead, or something else to make up the weight they should have carried in a race but which they didn't carry.

My old friend the late John Osborne, often complained to me that jockeys who rode for him seemed either to lack the ability, courtesy, or time to tell him how horses of his they had ridden had performed.

"I used to consider it part of my duty, and part of what I was paid for, to give an owner or trainer who engaged me, a full description from start to finish of races in which I rode," said Mr. Osborne, "for things often look very different through glasses from the stands to what they really are; and especially so with regard to starts. Often when the public thinks that a starter has missed good opportunities to 'let them go,' there is some little boy, or some horse quite unbalanced. This

cannot be seen from the stands but it would have made a bad start."

It is an old story, and one which has often been told, of someone who complained to John Osborne in his jockey days that he had not ridden to orders. Always courteous, John replied: "You're quite right, and I must apologise for not carrying out all your instructions, but the fact of the matter was that you gave me so many orders the race was not long enough to get them all in." Mr. Osborne never tired of telling this story and often related another from his store. This one was about "Speedy" Payne, who was once called before some very distinguished stewards to explain his riding. "Speedy" was as honest as the day and felt very much having been "carpeted" on three or four occasions in quick succession. He addressed the stewards thus:

"My lords, dukes, admirals and gentlemen. If I rides and loses they says I pulls; if I rides and wins they says I bumps, bores, or rides foul! I've got some money in the bank, a good wife and a home, and it's like this—I doesn't care a damn what you does with me."

"Speedy" left the stewards' room without a stain on his character or a reprimand! There is still a good deal of yelling and shouting and strong language amongst jockeys, particularly in big fields in hurdle races, but I don't think this is as bad as it used to be thirty years ago when there were far fewer runners in these races—indeed in all races—than there are to-day. I was brought up in a school which habitually yelled at and cursed everyone who came near them either in a race or when schooling. Those who took part in these home gallops were fearless horsemen, so that the theory often advanced that noisy horsemen are "windy" horsemen rather falls to the ground.

One was apt to get the inferiority complex pretty badly as the result of the criticisms hurled during these schools, and after they were over. But, just as John Osborne was unable to get in all the instructions given him in a particular race, so it was impossible to carry out the often diametrically opposed orders hurled at one during a gallop over fences, especially if the horse under

one was pulling double, and a keen wind on those hill-tops was making one's eyes stream. "Pull to the right!" from one, "Pull to the left!" from another; "Don't go so —— fast!" from one; "Send the ——'s at their fences!" from another, were commands apt to be a little confusing and difficult to carry out to please all.

Still, it was great fun; it gave thrills, and a wondrous feeling of the joyousness of life. There is something about the sense of power which the feel and consciousness of a good horse underneath one gives which cannot be reduced to words, and for which there is no equal or substitute.

When in one's twenties, when all the world is young and all the trees are green, we have had few bad falls, rather enjoy risks and danger, and ride with a spare neck in our pockets; then we can stand a lot of cursing, and a lot of snubs, in view of such compensations as I have outlined. They came daily with undiminishing pleasure as the memory of them to-day is an abiding joy. "Make a man happy to-day and you make him happy twenty years hence," wrote somebody once on a time. My happiness in these horses and these gallops of the past remains to-day, and will so remain a treasured possession of which no one can rob me till the end. I have always remembered what poor Lindsay Gordon said:

So the coward will dare on the gallant horse
What he never would dare alone,
Because he exults in a borrowed force,
And a hardihood not his own.

But the fact remains that it was no transient exultation, but one which still lives and will live as long as I do. I did not wholly transfer my affection from the chase to the Turf.

Indeed, I have always maintained through my later days when so much of my life has been spent in race-paddocks and in weighing-rooms as an official, that one good day's hunting is worth a month's racing, and that the greatest part of my Turf joy has been my experiences in stables and on training grounds behind the scenes.

Reverting to the crushing criticism—for of all people those connected with racing are the most frank, and the

least given to mincing their words when they *do* speak openly—one somehow more readily accepts the plain unvarnished truth from the mouth of a master at the game to which we aspire with better grace than in any other walk of life. This is so, no matter how those truths are personal and punctuated; that is if we are really anxious to learn from those at whose feet we metaphorically sit. There soon comes a time when a young soi-disant horseman realises his limitations when endeavouring to compete with his peers. Then is it he really begins to learn and to improve.

I can recall as though it was yesterday the first race meeting I ever attended. It was at Thirsk in 1904, this being our home fixture, some seven or eight miles below the Hambleton Hills. Curiously enough Mr. Wm. Allison, long the *Sportsman's* "Special Commissioner" (who was a native of the district), also saw his first race-horse at Hambleton, and first set foot on a race-course at Thirsk. In 1904, the year of which I am speaking, conditions on the Turf were vastly different in every respect and the evolution of the Thirsk meeting from what I first knew it exemplifies this. It might well be taken as a type.

The other day in the weighing-room at that very meeting, I asked Brig.-General Sir Loftus Bates, who controls this and so many other meetings in the north, if I was correct in thinking that thirty years ago there was no free stabling at race fixtures, no free forage, no quarters provided for lads in charge of horses, and no free luncheons and teas for owners and trainers. He told me that there was free stabling at Hamilton Park, and a certain amount at Lanark, but he could not recall any other meeting at which such conditions existed in 1904. Certainly at Thirsk we had our runners that year in not very good boxes in an inn-yard, for which boxes we had to pay, as also for the forage. There was no race stabling, and here, as elsewhere, trainers had to get their horses in at the various hotel yards.

Thirsk was an important town in the coaching days, and at the Fleece alone there used to be nearly (if not quite) a hundred horses stabled for horsing the mail

coaches and for posting, so that there was ample accommodation, as at most other old country hotels. The motor age has altered all this, even though it may have brought many of these old hostelries into their own again as places of entertainment for man—but not for beast! Most of their long ranges of boxes and stalled-stables have been turned into garages. This would have forced the hands of race executives had the erection of race stabling conveniently near the course not come as a natural development. The evolution is still continuing with the altered conditions of life and locomotion and with competition.

Now we have extensive motor parks, landing places for aeroplanes and amenities for the public on the course which had never been dreamed of when first I commenced racing. Even yet it is said that England is behind the Continent and some other parts of the world in respect of the consideration for those in the cheaper rings. Be this as it may, those of us who can carry our minds back no further than 1904 (the date I commence these memories) often discuss with some astonishment the forward strides there have been in every Turf connection since then.

The younger brigade of owners and trainers who are inclined to be very exacting and critical—I had almost written grasping!—are occasionally reminded of the conditions and inconveniences which existed at the beginning of this century. The railway companies did not cater much for the racing public or for trainers. On the contrary, Sir Alfred Pease, a lifelong friend of mine and one of the best sportsmen who ever lived, once told me that his forebears, the original Quaker railway directors of the North Eastern Railway Company, were definitely opposed to the Turf and more inclined to put obstacles in the way of both horses and the public reaching race meetings than to run trains for their convenience. On arriving at the nearest station to the course we often literally fought for seats in the old wagonettes which met trains and took us in a funeral procession to the paddock gates. The first to get outside the station secured the few musty ancient cabs (always excepting they had not been

all commandeered by local undertakers), and many who were anxious to get quickly to the course were compelled to walk, often considerable distances.

At night, and particularly on the final day's racing, the question of transport was even more difficult. It often meant that to miss a lift from the course meant spending an additional night away from home and starting at an unearthly hour next morning to reach another meeting. At best we often travelled in extreme discomfort in packed carriages and spent countless hours on journeys which are now made in a remarkably short time by car and 'plane.

At the October, 1934, fixture at Thirsk Mr. Geo. Colling told me that he had not set off from Newmarket for Yorkshire till after he had seen work done on the Heath and had had a comfortable breakfast. To be exact he began his northward journey at nine o'clock in the morning and arrived in the paddock in ample time to declare his runners and have lunch before racing commenced. It would have been considered impossible to do this thirty years ago, indeed it *would* have been impossible. Nevertheless, I told Mr. Colling that I had that very morning accidentally come across a reference to what was described (as certainly then *was*) a remarkable feat performed in 1834 by the famous Middleham jockey, Tommy Lye. He rode two winners one afternoon at Edinburgh, caught the Carlisle coach and by means of it and post-horses reached Northallerton in time to ride two more winners the following afternoon. This meant, of course, considerable physical exertion of which the present generation know little or nothing.

The afore-mentioned Mr. John Osborne used to tell me that when he was a boy he often rode a hack many miles to fulfil riding engagements and that on occasion he walked from Middleham with his saddle strapped to his back. To-day we hear of jockeys riding on the Continent one day and in England the next and even of trainers and jockeys attending and running and riding horses at two meetings on the same day. The aeroplane has made this possible whilst the motor car has in many respects revolutionised racing so that crowds which used

to be seen in the town streets till late at night, and many of whom stayed all night, now disperse almost immediately after the last race. Many of them and some of the bookmakers who have been "standing up," are hurrying away to attend the evening meetings at dog tracks. In earlier days they adjourned to the cockpit, and this was so even in my early days after certain meetings in Northumberland.

Taking as an example the Turf fixture at Thirsk of which I have been speaking hundreds of those who attend it never now enter the town at all. It is the same at many other places I could mention. There are contributory reasons to those connected with the ease of intercommunication and the hustle of to-day. Racing—flat racing at any rate—is much less a holiday (except to the locals) than it used to be. There is a different spirit amongst the racing crowds. It is less leisurely, less friendly, less interested in sportsmen and in horses, *quâ* horses, and more concerned with the commercial side.

The whole atmosphere of the paddock and basic motives seem to have altered. I think not for the better, and I fancy those who are comparatively new-comers would agree with this if they realised the old tradition and what the old type of sportsman, who rang true, meant to racing. I say this because of the general popularity of those few remaining men who wear the genial mantle once so commonly found. They are a link between the more lovable, more approachable paddock personalities one knew when I commenced my career on the Turf and this generation. Then men were interested in so and so as the son of his father as well as for his own place in the world of sport; they were interested too, and knowledgeable, regarding the breeding and antecedents of the horses in the parade ring, and all this with the eyes and minds of sportsmen rather than with a view to the betting ring.

Even so, wagering—particularly *ante-post* wagering—was certainly much heavier than it is to-day, though it is worth placing on record that I never knew any of the Adams trio have a shilling on a horse, however much they fancied it. They told their patrons, and maybe

certain others, when they could put down their money with confidence and doubtless benefited thereby, but they had no truck with the ring themselves. They had seen too many good things and good men come undone through wagering for them to gamble, though they brought off not a few well-planned certainties, not only because of their knowledge as to when their horses were ready to run for their lives, but also because of their skill in placing them.

That is where some very able trainers have failed. They have had the stable craft to get their horses fighting fit but have failed to put them into races and on to courses which would suit them best. It was my aforementioned old trainer friend Mr. R. I. Robson who was advised by his father to "get the best horses you can into the worst company you can," but even this is not the be all and end all of success. The distance and the course are equally important factors towards success.

CHAPTER II

JOCKEYS OF TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

OF the jockeys riding on the flat when I commenced racing thirty years ago only two still hold licences, and they are both north-country men. One is Dicky Crisp, the other is George Topping. Up to the end of 1933 Joe Thwaites, another northerner, was also riding, but he then handed in his colours and took to the pen. They, like myself, and others whose memories go back to the beginning of this century, have seen two generations of jockeys come and go. Many of their names even are forgotten, so short is the recollection of the public for its one-time heroes. A number of those who were riding in 1904 are now trainers, most of them have fallen into oblivion and, though several of them had money to burn in 1904, one could almost count on the fingers of one hand those who are warm, or even comfortable, at their bankers to-day.

Such is the transient and evanescent nature of fame and fortune! They had never been used to having money, and, if they saved whilst in their hey-day, they played ducks and drakes with their balance when they gave up riding. Some of them started backing horses only to find that jockeys' tips (notoriously the worst obtainable!) put them "in the cart." Some of them made foolish investments, others were too big-hearted and short-sighted to refuse to help everyone who "told them the tale." It is sad, but it is a fact, that only very, very few of those who were in the limelight, run after, flattered, fawned over, and earning thousands a year at the time of which I write, now have more than will just keep them in a quiet retired life. A few haven't even that, and others are "doing their two horses" in stables

as "lads," "tipping," or beneficiaries under the Bentinck, or other racing charities.

Old Seth Chandley still had a licence in 1904, and amongst those in the forefront of their profession in alphabetical order, were Crickmere (then an apprentice), Bernard Dillon, Harry Escott, Claude and William Halsey, S. Heapy, C. Heckford (apprentice), Tristram Heppell, Wm. Higgs, J. Howard, Herbert Jones, W. Lane, the Leader brothers, Otto Madden, George and John McCall, Danny Maher, the Martins, Joe Plant, H. Randall, F. Rickaby, Charlie Ringstead, H. Robbins (apprentice), Gordon Sadler, H. Stokes, the two Templemans, Joe Thwaites (an apprentice), the Toons, Charlie Trigg, and Elijah Wheatley. These were the flat-race jockeys who were getting the cream of the riding.

Tod Sloan's career had come to a sudden end four years before this. "My downfall was due to a swollen head and high living," he candidly admitted. "I had £100,000 once, and lords and ladies sought my company, but I lost my money through bad friends and unfortunate speculations." He died in the charity ward of the city hospital at Los Angeles on December 21st, 1933. One who went to see him there described him as "a little wizened man of sixty. . . . The tennis-ball of fortune of the closing years of last century." Although Todhunter Sloan revolutionised the style of jockeyship in England it is not correct to say (as so often *has* been said) that he was the first to introduce the now accepted short leathers and monkey crouch into this country.

A year or two before Sloan came to England a coloured jockey named Simms had ridden here "like a monkey up a stick," but he had not the opportunities which came to Sloan, whose style and successive victories made owners and trainers not only take notice but see that their jockeys adopted the forward seat. The late John Osborne told me that he always rode much shorter than most of his contemporaries, and that, long before the Sloan-caused transformation scene, he taught his apprentices to "get up their horses necks." Although the Sloan seat had been generally adopted just before my time it was

still much discussed, ridiculed and jeered at by some of the older hands, adopted perforce but under protest by some jockeys, and only partially by others, who hated it and not infrequently found themselves on the floor if a horse "did anything."

Men who could have sat any ordinary bucking animal, and would not have moved if a horse pecked, or suddenly whipped round, found they parted company under the new style. This did not make them more amenable or adaptable, and was pie for the conservatives and "antis," who were not far wrong when they argued that all the grace and beauty had gone out of horsemanship. Of course some of the apprentices in 1904 endeavoured to out-Herod Herod, and I have several notes in my diary of trainers ordering them to "let those leathers down two or three holes."

The late William P Anson was one of those who would not allow his jockeys to what he called "knock their teeth out with their knees." He always used to say that the finest jockey he had ever seen was old Jim Snowden—"be he drunk or sober." Jim, who was often in the former condition, I am told, rode very long, but John Osborne used to say he was as good in a finish as anyone he ever rode against. Snowden did not live to see the influence of Sloan, for he died in 1889, Sloan's first mount in England being in 1897. Tod was still hoping to return to the English Turf when I began my connection with racing, but though he went on applying for his licence till 1915 he never had it restored. Whatever may have been the merits of the Sloan case—betting was his admitted crime!—I *do* think that the present system of punishment adopted by the English Jockey Club might well be revised.

No one who comes under the ban of the all-powerful ruling authority is told what his sentence actually is. It may be a year, it may be three, or even life, as in the case of Sloan. Those who have incurred displeasure do not know whether to go on hoping, or whether to endeavour to take up some other walk in life—not an easy matter for those who have never known anything but riding, horses and racing.

As I shall in due course record, a novel of mine named *Warned Off*, published in 1934, urged an alteration of the existing indefiniteness of punishment and resulted in my relinquishing the licence to act as judge, which I had held for fifteen years.

Reverting to jockeys, in other days it was customary for boys to go into racing stables at the age of ten or eleven. Some of them before they reached that age. They were often "spotted" by men who were first-rate horsemen themselves and who saw them going well to hounds, or riding ponies at some village sports.

One well-known owner when asked where he found the light-weights who rode his horses so well, replied: "I breed 'em on the estate"; and so it often was. The old-time trainers insisted on having lads at nine or ten, and argued that it was almost impossible to make jockeys of boys who had reached their teens before they began their apprenticeship. There are some trainers to-day who hold similar views, but owing to the difficulties connected with the Education Act, they are compelled to wait till likely lads have left school. In some few instances arrangements have been made for boys to be apprenticed, to regularly ride out at exercise, and occasionally to have a mount in public, whilst still at school. This was done in the case of the Wootton boys, young Ian Martin, Harry Carr and others I could mention, as it was with George Formby when his late father got George Drake to take him into his stable at Middleham to see if young George had the makings of a jockey in him.

It is often argued as to what is the earliest age a jockey ever rode in a race. I should imagine my old friend the late Mr. George Stafford Thompson, of Newbuilding, Thirsk, could claim that distinction, as he was only about seven when his father lifted him out of his carriage at York and put him on to one of his horses to ride in a match. Mr. Thompson had imagined that the conditions were "owners up," but found his opponent had engaged a Malton feather-weight to ride. Thus it was little George (who in after life became such a wonderful amateur jockey) was given his first mount when his bodily weight was only 2 st. 13 lb. His instructions were "Hold your

reins tight, and as soon as they say 'Go' come home as fast as you can." He won the match easily.

Capt. Becher had a little boy in his stable who, in 1840, rode in the Wokingham Stakes when his walking weight was 2 st. 1 lb. In 1933 an apprentice named Reynolds rode Koodoo at the age of twelve, but Ian Martin, the loquacious, high-pitched voiced son of Teddy Martin, had his first mount in public at Newbury in 1927, when he was only ten. His father, when he won the Cesarewitch nearly half a century ago, only weighed 3st. 10lb., but Ian soon became too heavy to get much riding and went to ride at Northolt Pony Races at the end of 1934. Frank Wootton began to ride in races in South Africa when he was ten, and that was also the age of Johnny Daley when he made his debut as a jockey.

That bright boy Tommy Rimell, who like I. Martin soon got too heavy, rode his first winner at Chepstow in 1926, when he was twelve. In 1934 he began to ride under National Hunt Rules, having his initial mount over fences at Cheltenham. He has since done well. Percy Woodland rode his first winner in a 'chase at Lingfield when he was only twelve. I fancy Sid Menzies was still younger when he had his first success over a country.

Others who commenced to wear silk when equally young could be quoted. Amongst them are Frank Lyall, who had a mount on the flat at Doncaster before he had reached his eleventh year.

All these had had opportunities to learn at an age when it is much easier to teach, and when boys are much more ready to learn than when they are older. There is no doubt about it that trainers are handicapped to-day by not getting boys till they have left school. They are then often inclined to fancy they "know it all" in a few weeks, they are often found lacking in "guts," and Mr. "Bob" Armstrong blames the conditions under which they were bred during the war for the inferiority of the present generation of apprentices.

There may be something in this, but I am convinced that the Education Act has had a good deal to do with the deterioration. As to establishing schools to turn out jockeys (as has been suggested), I do not think this

would ever be a success. Trainers can see soon enough for themselves if a boy is going to be worth his salt, but may not always be able to persuade their patrons to let such lads prove their worth. There is only one place in which jockeys receive the finish to their education and that is on race-courses. Natural, or acquired, ability coupled with opportunity, and a few mounts able to win races at the outset of their career—these are the secrets of the success of most jockeys.

The earlier they begin their tuition and to ride against other jockeys, the more likely they are to succeed.

Seth Chandley must have been the oldest jockey riding in 1904. He didn't have many mounts, but was an interesting link between the past and present century. I had many, to me, delightful chats with him and found in my diary the following story he told me :

"I consider the best race I ever rode was at 'Ponty' (Pontefract). That's not a kid's course. . . . I was on the favourite, top weight up, and came up against a hot-pot, kept and readied for the occasion. I was beaten, but congratulated myself that I had never used such brains as God had given me to better advantage and never got more ready response from any horse I had ever ridden. Often I blamed myself after a race and knew I'd thrown chances away and might have won if I'd done different, but on this occasion I couldn't find the least fault with myself. A crowd of miners rushed on to the course when I was coming back through the Paddock gate after I'd been beaten, and I thought they were going to tear me to pieces. However, I got through and they didn't, though I heard them roaring like hungry lions. 'Ignorant beggars,' I thought. 'Shows how much they know about jockeyship and when a man's trying his damndest to beat something better than he's on himself.'"

It was on the same Pontefract course at the 1893 summer meeting that he had five mounts and five wins on the second day. At Paisley the same year he won on each of the five horses he rode. At Ayr, in September, he again rode five winners, and at Edinburgh a fortnight later he had ten rides and six winners. He was then

with Mr. Dobson Peacock and for him won the 1893 Manchester November Handicap on the 40 to 1 Golden Drop. He rode three successive Cumberland Plate winners and in 1888 was successful in the Lincoln Handicap, Ascot Stakes and Cambridgeshire. But Seth's winners were too many to enumerate. He was born at New Mills, Derbyshire, and ended his career as a "boots" at a Stockport Hotel. He died in the Shaw Heath Institution in his sixty-third year on August 24th, 1926. Poor Seth, he hadn't a penny in his latter days, though he must have had a lot of money through his hands in his day.

Joe Plant, of course, was a mere chicken to Seth. Joe (Hackenschmidt they used to call him after the gigantic wrestler of that time) was apprenticed to R. Sherwood, with whom the brothers Griggs and Crickmere also served their time. In 1909 Plant had ridden the Cesarewitch winner (Submit) and in 1910 won the Lincoln Handicap on Cinderello. That same year he had a bad fall at Kempton when riding Blackstone, his mount falling and rolling on him. For long his life was in the balance. However, he recovered, and had a licence till 1919. Later he assisted in the making of some films, and also ran a tobacco shop at Leamington. Joe Plant always seemed to really enjoy life, and if there was any fun astir he was one of those who enjoyed it to the full, if there wasn't then he was the one to make some. Countless stories used to be told of him in his riding days. Some of these were doubtless true, but I fancy some of them were born in the *Pink 'Un* office and fathered on to him. The last time I saw him racing he was smoking a cigar of Lonsdale length, and was full of that ready repartee which had always characterised him. I may be wrong, but it never struck me that Plant was really fond of horses as are some jockeys, who look upon them as something more than mere racing machines. He was a strong horseman, and owing to his successes on a horse named The Policeman was often called "Policeman Plant," though in stables his name was Kruger.

Herbert Otto Madden was top of the winning jockeys

list in 1904 with 161 winning mounts. He had also been top in 1898 with the same number, second in 1899 with 130 wins, top again in 1901 with 130 successes, premier jockey in 1903 and 1904 with 154 and 161 wins respectively and second in 1905 and 1906 lists with 119 and 104 successes respectively. Born at Hoppergarten in Germany, January 2nd, 1872, he was the son of a jockey who was closely associated with the famous Hungarian mare Kincsem.

This mare, who won no fewer than fifty-four races in most of which she was ridden by Otto Madden's father, retired from the Turf with an unbeaten record. As a boy Otto Madden came to England and was apprenticed to the late Richard Marsh. He rode his first winner at Newmarket on Colonel North's Rough and Ready. The following year he won the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood on Unicorn, and the same race in 1893 on Dumbarton Castle, over which I believe a big coup was landed. In 1898 he won the Derby on Jeddah, which started at 100 to 1, and the same year he won the Cesarewitch and Manchester handicap on Chalereux. Amongst his other successes were 1899 Oaks (Musa), 1905 St. Leger (Challacombe), 1899 and 1901 Lincoln Handicaps (General Peace and Little Eva), 1897 City and Suburban (Balsamo).

Shortly before 1914 he retired, but during the war years he renewed his riding licence and won the Substitute Oaks on Major (now Lord) Astor's Sunny Jane and the Cesarewitch on Mr. W. Cazalet's Air Raid. He afterwards took up training, the first winner he turned out being Wamba, owned by Mr. G. A. Prentice, for whom he had so often ridden. In 1925 he owned a useful mare in Chapeau, who, in addition to winning some half-dozen handicaps, won the Ebor Handicap at York. Otto Madden was, as he is to-day, a level-headed, quiet, retiring man, who never "threw his weight about," was always ready to laugh at a joke against himself, knew how to keep his own counsel, and was careful both as to his company and his money. He never made or chose his friends from the "heads" or professional backers and Turf hangers-on as have

done some jockeys of this generation, and struck one as being of rather a different class to some of his contemporaries.

Many are the interesting stories he has told me, and had he put them on paper they would have made a much more interesting collection of Turf memories than most of those which have been published. Otto, however, has never sought publicity. He has ever been a worker and is one of those who carry their years lightly. I see very little change in him to when I first knew him thirty years ago, and he is one of the few remaining links with the merry past still at full grips with Turf affairs.

Willie Lane's riding career came to an end just as I embarked upon the Turf. He had a bad accident at Lingfield in September, 1904, when his mount Belosselsky came down, as the result of which he lay unconscious for weeks. Willie had been top of the jockeys list in 1902 with 170 wins and second the two following years. Though his "classic" victories were confined to the 1904 One Thousand Guineas, Oaks and St. Leger, they will always occupy a cameo-like record in the annals of the Turf through their association with one of the best mares of all time—the peerless Pretty Polly. Bred by her owner Major Eustace Loder, at the Eyrefield stud in Ireland, and by Gallinule out of Admiration, Pretty Polly as a two-year-old won all the nine races in which she competed.

Lane first rode her in the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster previous to which she had won twice at Sandown and once at Liverpool. From thence onwards she was invariably ridden by Lane until the accident previously referred to terminated his riding career. He was in the saddle when she won, in addition to the race at Doncaster, the Autumn Breeders' Foal Plate (Manchester), Cheveley Park Stakes, Middle Park Plate, Criterion Stakes and Moulton Stakes (all at Newmarket).

In her second season Lane again bestrode her when she won the Classic races named and the Coronation Stakes (Ascot), Nassau Stakes (Goodwood) and the Park Hill Stakes (Doncaster). In all her racing career Pretty

Polly was only beaten on two occasions, viz. Prix du Conseil Municipal (Paris), 1904, and in the Ascot Gold Cup of 1906. Singularly enough Maher, who had won the Free Handicap of 1904 and the Champion Stakes of 1905 on the mare, was on the back of Bachelor's Button when Mr. Sol. Joel's colt so sensationally defeated the mare in the Ascot Gold Cup which was her last race. Lane was cut off just at the zenith of his career when he, Otto Madden, W. Halsey, D. Maher and George McCall were battling for supremacy following the Loates and Reiff era and just prior to the Wootton epoch. Lane has a son, John Charles, who was apprenticed to V. Smyth.

In 1905 Elijah Wheatley was at the top of the tree with 124 winners, O. Madden being next with 119 and W. Higgs third with 107. Wheatley was always called "Whippet" or "Whip," his stable name sticking to him through his career. He is a Yorkshireman, born in the East Riding in 1889, and has a peculiar cast in one eye which always gives him a solemn appearance, though I remember him as a lad in his teens when he was anything but solemn after a day's racing. Like some of the other lads riding at that time he was up to all sorts of boisterous fun in the evening. They none of them went to bed as early as "old man Wootton" saw to it a year or two later that Frank retired. Wheatley was apprenticed to the late William Elsey at Baumber at a time when that trainer had a big string of horses.

Elijah was still only an apprentice when he topped the list of winning jockeys in 1905, but though he got a good deal of riding for some years afterwards he never again reproduced that form. On leaving Elsey he went to Middleham to ride for Dobson Peacock. In 1913 he won the St. Leger on Night Hawk, and in 1919 won the Manchester November Handicap on King John. He had some very lean years and I know got very depressed and despondent. He was never very robust looking and began to suffer from rheumatism and so, having had only fifteen mounts and one winner in 1923, went to Egypt, becoming trainer to the King of Egypt in 1933.

In a way success came too soon to Wheatley. He was

lionised as a boy before he was old enough to understand how quickly stars in the Turf firmament fall and new ones appear. He later always gave me the impression of having a grievance against the world in general and the Turf world in particular. There was some open wound that never healed, and he was as a man nursing a secret sorrow. When he roused himself out of this attitude towards mankind he could be as vivacious as the rest, but that was in the fun and frolic of the evening, when all the lights were on and spirits ran high.

On the course and in the weighing-room he was often as grave as a monk, and his demeanour did not tend to draw men to him. Dan Leno once said that he sometimes had his bread buttered on both sides, at others he had no butter at all. I fancy Wheatley's butter was spread too thickly in his early days. He is not the only instance of this in the jockey world, in which the barometer often falls just as quickly as it has risen.

William Arnold Higgs, born in London, February 8th, 1879, and apprenticed to Humphreys at Lambourne, then (on Humphreys death) to Chandler, was always a jockey with a considerable amount of personality. He was a strong youth and a strong character—civil enough to the civil, but not to be trifled with by anyone, be their position what it might. Although he preferred the South to the North he always looked upon York as his lucky course, and certainly had considerable success on it. He went to Ireland when he was out of his time, and on returning to this country was associated with J. C. Sullivan for whom he won the Ebor in 1904 and 1905 on War Wolf and The Page, and again in 1909 on Dibs.

In 1908 the Gimcrack fell to him on Blankney II, and York's Knavesmire was the scene of many more of his triumphs. If Higgs were asked which was the best horse he had ever ridden he would, in all probability, declare for Willonyx, on which colt in 1911 he won the Chester Cup, the Ascot Stakes, the Cesarewitch and the Jockey Club Cup. Four years previously he rode Land League, a winner in the Cambridgeshire, and he was also on the back of Slieve Gallion when Colonel Greer's colt won the Two Thousand Guineas in the same year.

In all he rode 1002 winners before he retired from the saddle and commenced training in 1923. Always a big-boned man, he had to waste hard, indeed up to 1932 internal trouble followed almost every meal owing to the undermining of his physique in his riding days. He is by no means alone in this in his profession, though certain men—the late Tom Bruckshaw, George McCall and the late Jim Fagan—got their weight down by walking rather than by either Turkish baths or physic. Tom Bruckshaw told me at Thirsk so recently as October, 1934, that he attributed his long life and his excellent health to “not having played fast and loose with his internal mysteries.”

Higgs as a young man carried himself with a certain air and dignity which commanded respect. He was never a tuft hunter, he had no use for the lick spittle flatterers who endeavour to batten on to successful jockeys and trainers. He was never swelled-headed, and was inclined to rather stand aloof, though sociable enough to those he knew to be his friends. He was by no means “Billy” to all and sundry and I have seen him make some people curl up with a look. He was champion jockey in 1906 and 1907 with 149 and 145 wins respectively, and was, in addition, amongst the first three leading jockeys in 1905 (107 wins), 1908 (124 wins), 1909 (101 wins), not a bad record. To see him to-day one would never imagine that he was within the memory of living man riding as a lightweight.

Who would think the same of R. W. Colling,¹ “Ruby” Thomson and Melton Vasey to-day. Yet the latter rode at about six stones. The inscription on George Fordham’s tombstone is “It’s the pace that kills,” but reducing weight by privation and irregular meals, also adds a number of nails to the coffin. Stark tragedy has done much to darken the later years of the life of this one time deservedly popular jockey. The year after Higgs commenced training he ran his horse William Tell, ridden by his son Arnold Ebor Higgs, in the Earl of Chester’s Welter Handicap at Chester.

¹ R. W. Colling senior got on to the scale at Thirsk May meeting, 1935, and was exactly 12 st. He remarked to Mr. J. W. Atkinson, clerk of the scale: “It’s some time since I sat here and only weighed 6 st. 7 lb.”

The horse pecked and threw the nineteen-year-old boy heavily, whilst another horse in the race trod on him and so severely injured him as to cause his death, which took place in the Chester Infirmary. In the year 1932, whilst another son, Anthony, aged twelve years, was watching some threshing tackle at work on a neighbouring farm, he stepped on a board on the machine and slipped, with the result that his leg, which was caught in the drum, was torn off and he, too, died in the Acland Home, Oxford.

To return to the subject of wasting, I am reminded that Jim Fagan (who died January 20th, 1932), told me some curious stories regarding his efforts to keep down his weight. He had just given up riding (in 1903) when I entered the Turf arena, and had bought Grove House at Malton, where he was training. I shall have more to say of him when I come to speak of trainers. He once put on a pound weight at York after eating a small pear to quench his thirst, and had other experiences of a wasting jockey's weight increasing out of all proportion to what was eaten or drunk.

Many instances could be quoted to prove this. For instance, in 1932 Joe Marshall had a drink after weighing out on a very hot day at Hamilton Park. He had been wasting hard and when he returned to scale he was overweight. His mount Caress was beaten a neck, but was disqualified. A *Sporting Chronicle* correspondent in dealing with this incident added: "I recall the case a few years ago of a famous jockey who had been wasting hard to do his minimum weight. After weighing out he felt weak and had a coffee and liqueur brandy. When he returned to scale he was 5lbs. over-weight."

I fancy Mr. Bob Colling (such a straight man to hounds even yet) advised his two sons Jack and George to give up riding so soon as their weight had reached such proportions that to continue as jockeys would mean suffering the same torture of the damned he himself had experienced. Robert Weston Colling was of course riding in 1904. He was born April 6th, 1872, being the son of a well-known Yorkshire hunting farmer. Having ridden to hounds from an early age he turned his thoughts

to race riding and was apprenticed to Mr. "Bob" Armstrong, then training at Penrith.

His first winning ride was at Gosforth Park, Newcastle, in 1889, when he won on Montaigne. There was a sensation attendant on this race for the winner turned out to be not Montaigne at all. The mistake occurred in this way. In 1886 Messrs. R. and H. A. Harrison were at Aislaby, near Ripon, breeding bloodstock (the stud was moved to Stetchworth, Newmarket, later), and amongst their yearlings that season were Montaigne by Rosebery, and D'Orsay by Beau Brummell. Both were bays with similar markings, but Montaigne met with an accident as a foal which left a scar on a hind fetlock.

Captain Machell bought them both privately after they had failed to reach their reserves at the Doncaster sales. Somehow they got mixed up and D'Orsay ran as Montaigne, whilst Montaigne won races as D'Orsay. On the former, Colling also won races at Beverley, Hull, and what is now Haydock Park. It was Mr. Robert Harrison who discovered the mistaken identity. Being at Newmarket he recognised Montaigne in Jewitt's string by the scar, but was told it was D'Orsay. He informed Captain Machell of the error, and the Captain placed the whole facts before the Jockey Club, who allowed the name to be changed without disqualifying Montaigne for the races Colling had won. From Armstrong Colling went to William I'Anson's then all-conquering stable at Malton and for him and Lord Penrhyn rode many winners without ever capturing a "classic."

He was associated with the mystery mare Self Sacrifice,¹ trained by I'Anson. She was by Bread Knife out of Lady Godiva and was owned by the curious Mr. P. Buchanan. When increasing weight at last compelled Colling to give up riding he commenced farming at Habton in the Sinnington country, and started a little pack of harriers. A story is told that one Sunday morning when exercising his hounds, they got on to the line of a travelling fox and ran him right through a local churchyard just as the worshippers were leaving. I don't think this would disturb Colling much, or yet a Yorkshire congregation.

¹ See *Malton Memories and I'Anson Triumphs*, p. 294.



MR "BOB" COLLING

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Colling, of course, married an P'Anson, so his much-liked sons "Young Bob" and George have plenty of racing blood in their veins. I may be wrong, but I am inclined to think that Mr. R. Colling senior, has been keener in his later years on hunting and shooting than racing, as was Sir John Renwick, who for some years trained in Northumberland and then at Whitewall, Malton, which place his father bought. I have already remarked upon Mr. Colling's ability to get across country to hounds, well, "Young Bob" is just as good. I have seen the former going in the Bedale and Hurworth countries as well as any man alongside whom I have ever ridden.

Those were the days when he was training at Spigot Lodge, Middleham. He left there during the war years for Newmarket. He and his close friends Mr. R. I. Robson and Mr. Leatham Whitwell, were three of the most fearless men to hounds I ever had the pleasure to watch—and it *was* a pleasure! In recent years Mr. Colling has only paid irregular visits to the scenes of his quondam triumphs, and often when he has come he has spent a good deal of his time in the weighing-room. This has not been to avoid old friends with whom he had so many happy days in the past, but, I fancy, to escape from those pestilential "tip hunters" who make the lives of some men a misery in the paddock by dogging their footsteps and insisting on them "marking their cards." There is a certain type of race-goer who consider it the duty of those whom they consider to be in a sort of hallowed circle and therefore "in the know," to act as their gambling advisers. Rather than be worried by them or give offence, Mr. Colling has stayed where they have not the "entrée." R. W. Colling, of course, was quite a different class both by birth and education to most of his riding contemporaries—and looked it.

There is a good deal of truth in the adage "Breeding will tell," though old John Osborne used to say he liked to get his apprentices from the slums of Manchester because they had "learned to take care of themselves, had their wits about them, and could hold their own." The public school spirit inculcates all this too.

I used to see a lot of poor Tristram ("Tiny") Heppell, who rode so well, and steered so many winners for Peacock's Middleham stable when he was connected with it. He had, like George McCall, a boy's weight with a man's strength and never had to waste much. There was one thing about him. If he's had his cake and eaten it, he never whines. I haven't seen him for a year or two, but in recent times heard of him getting up on a "flapper" at the ancient Houghton Feast meeting in County Durham and giving an exhibition of how he won the Northumberland Plate on Palmy Days. Heppell was always a humorist. He looked rather like an "imp," or india rubber pixie, though, like Sloan, he was always immaculately dressed in his hey-day. Even in his youth he had the appearance of a little old man, one of those whose age you could never guess correctly. He was born in the county of Durham, and, again like George McCall, at one time seemed to have the world at his feet. Both were *bon vivants*, and allowances must be made for temperament.

A jockey who is getting a lot of riding and doing much travelling, who is sought after, and has the chance of a couple of mounts in almost every race, is keyed up to constant concert pitch. His life is one long strain and whirl of excitement. When the day is over he must either find all the fizz gone out of the champagne and fall flat or he must take steps to revive the sparkle. The wise man, who realises that he cannot long live on his nerves, and who also sees that his hand is constantly in his pocket if he tries to do so, rests. Irrepressible youth, if unguided and unrestrained, is more disposed to a short life and a merry one. Such "Tiny" Heppell undoubtedly had on the Turf. Would he and some of his contemporaries act otherwise if they could have their time over again knowing what they know? I wonder. They may have fewer regrets than those who often feel sorry for them imagine. It may be they consider the game is worth the candle. Life, and the way we live it, is such a relative matter. We cannot always diagnose the feelings and estimates of others. I fancy "Tiny" Heppell now has some post at a County

Durham colliery. Since the war we have seen him—scarlet waistcoat and cigar and all—at the Northumberland Plate Meeting at Newcastle, but he has found that there are very few left now whom he knows. The last time I came across him at a race meeting he remarked that Sir Loftus Bates, his old masters Mr. Dobson Peacock, Matt Peacock, Messrs. Armstrong, Binnie, George Manser, George Taylor and myself were the only ones he recognised. So does the Turf army change within a few years! There are always new recruits coming up—men who live in the present and care little for the past with its giants, its tradition, and its wonderful story.

In 1900 Heppell had won the Manchester November Handicap on Lexicon, two years later he won the Cumberland Plate on Gardenhurst, and I heard him cheered like royalty in 1904 when he won the Northumberland Plate on Mr. J. Baird Hay's Palmy Days, on which he had been successful in the Liverpool Autumn Cup the previous year. I fancy "Tiny" was as pleased at winning the Plate at Newcastle as if he had won the Derby, for the Northumberland Plate—the Pitman's Derby, as it is called—means more to Northerners than those from the South and Midlands can conceive. There is a local patriotism as well as a national patriotism, and the former often reaches its flood tide in connection with local Turf events. The jockeys who win it, and the horses they ride, become heroes. Their names are inscribed on a roll of fame, and even yet there are those in Northumberland and Durham County who talk of "the day Tiny Heppell won the Plate on Palmy Days." He was one of those little men whom no one would ever have taken for anything but a jockey. There are some trainers and others who have been connected all their lives with horses, who look and dress the part. On the other hand there are many who give no indication of their "horsey" calling.

George McCall was one of these. His round, chubby, almost choir-boy face (it was reserved for Michael Beary to be dubbed "Angel face") gave no clue to his profession. Perhaps his height and walk might to those who have noted the quick, short steps of those who ride much.

George and John McCall are the sons of the late John McCall (he died December 20th, 1931), who for long trained at Dunbar. They were both apprenticed to their father, and George climbed to the top of the tree as a jockey without ever having either the opportunities, or the brilliant successes in the Classics which later on came to Steve Donoghue, Thomas Weston and Gordon Richards. Yet, no one who remembers the dependable, well-mannered, honest little Scotchman riding will deny that he was a great horseman in every sense of the word, and a great jockey. He was bred and born into the game, he loved horses, he understood them, he had strength, judgment, courage, hands, head and seat. What is more, he rode on the principle that a race is never lost until it is won. Many were his victories snatched out of the fire when all chance of success seemed to have gone. He caught not a few of his contemporaries "napping" on the post, and others, who waited too long for a spectacular finish, found George suddenly coming from nowhere to beat them. A striking tribute to his abilities was that paid by the late Danny Maher, who told me more than once that George was one of the "strongest finishers" against whom he ever rode. There was no one better on a sluggish horse which would not "put it all in," and no one who could better handle an animal given to "chucking it." If he used his whip when occasion demanded it he was just as understanding in his handling of a nervous, funky animal which required "kidding to." George McCall was born in 1880 and is three years older than his brother John, who never had quite the same opportunities. George continued to hold a licence till 1930, but got so little riding he did not apply for a licence that year, though I remember him getting on to the scale at Hamilton Park in the same year and telling me that he was still 7 st. 11 lb.—exactly the same weight he was when he gave up. In the beginning of this century he rode a great deal for Colonel McCalmont, the late Colonel Hall Walker (afterwards Lord Wavertree), who presented the National Stud to the Nation, for the Rothschilds and for Frank Hartigan.

He was just about as good as any of his contemporaries

at this period and on October 21st, 1901, when there were only five races on the card at Beverley, he rode four winners and a dead-heat at the meeting, whilst the same year at Eglinton he rode three winners and his brother John two, and they were third and second in the remaining race. That, by the way, was George's most successful year. He finished third in the winning jockeys' list only three points behind Danny Maher. Amongst his outstanding successes were the Cumberland Plate, 1901 (Puerto); One Thousand Guineas, 1905 (Colonel Hall Walker's Cherry Lass); Northumberland Plate 1908 (Old China). In St. Maclou's Lincoln Handicap (1902) it is interesting to recall that McCall beat Sceptre. The finish for this race is still discussed by old hands and the result is worth tabulating :

Colonel. H. McCalmont's St. Maclou by St. Simon,
4 years, 7 st. 12 lb. G. McCall 1.
Mr. R. S. Sievier's Sceptre, 3 years, 6 st. 6 lb. F. Hardy 2.
Mr. Binding's Over Norton, 5 years, 7 st. Condon 3.
Lord Carnarvon's The Solicitor, 4 years, 6 st. 12 lb.
Dainty 4.

11 to 4 against Sceptre, 7 to 1 against Veles, 100 to 8 each against St. Maclou and Pellison, 33 to 1 against The Solicitor, 50 to 1 against Over Norton. Won by a head, the same between second and third, and a neck between third and fourth. Twenty-three ran.

Of course, George McCall came in for his share of "presents" and earned a considerable sum in fees. He had his house at Newmarket and did things in style. It is a question though if his presents—or those of many other jockeys, credited with frequent cheques of £1000 or so—ever reached as much as Dame Rumour imagined. George McCall, as a matter of fact, has often told me that the amounts he was supposed to have received were very much exaggerated. Certainly he was well off at one time, though he has been far from it for some years, and now lives in a cottage at Dunbar, and in 1934 "rode out" for John Boyd, who took his father's place. George now very rarely comes racing.

Speaking of jockeys' presents this seems an appropriate

place to say a few words on this subject. Whilst it is true, as I have already said, that a considerable number of the leading jockeys in the early part of this century have gone through all they had, the "all" is undoubtedly much less than the condemnatory general public estimate. It is true, in not a few instances, of jockeys having been given a cheque for £1000 after winning a Classic race, and some few high wagers in the past have handed the jockey who has helped them to land a big *coup*, a similar amount. The late Mr. James Merry gave Harry Custance £1000 when he won the Derby and £50,000 in bets with Thormanby in 1860. Sir Joseph Hawley had previously given Job Marson £2000 for riding Teddington to victory in the Epsom Classic; whilst when Blue Gown won the same race for him, Sir Joseph gave Wells the stakes (over £6000). Mr. Tom Masterman's present to Arthur Nightingall when he won the National on Ilex was a cheque for £1000 which Arthur got back from the bank and had framed. A few other jockeys both on the flat and under National Hunt rules have received similar rewards.

These instances, however, are the exception, for the giving of big money-presents to winning jockeys is not customary. Indeed, poor Tod Sloan gave as an excuse for the bets which brought him under the ban of the English Jockey Club, that "In the year 1900 it would have been difficult for me to keep up what was compared with other years a really comparative modest expenditure without betting. Little or nothing came my way except my riding fees." The late Mr. Alfred Watson got a jockey to write a chapter on his profession in the book, *The Racing World*, and in it he said:

"There are presents, too. If you win a big race the owner as a rule behaves more or less generously—as a rule, not always: some owners think it is a bad thing to spoil jockeys, and avoid extravagance 'on principle'; only 'on principle,' they say, and of course if a gentleman is not of a liberal disposition such principles are very agreeable and convenient to him."

A story is told of the famous John Day being summoned into the presence of the then Duke of Grafton, for whom he had won a couple of important events.



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GEO. McCALL



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FRANK WOOTTON

His Grace with some flourish handed Day a £20 note, which was considered generous in an age when a side of bacon, a cheese or barrel of beer in addition to wages, were the usual presents jockeys received. To-day it is not unusual for a jockey to be told that the owner of a fancied animal is putting him a "pony" on with the stable commission at starting price, whilst many small owners give apprentices £5, and a fully licensed jockey £20 in addition to their fee, for riding winners in little races. In a considerable number of cases, however, jockeys receive nothing beyond their fees; indeed, I could mention several instances in which they have not even had an expression of thanks when they have been successful.

Joe Thwaites tells a story of an owner for whom he had won a big race, giving him a pair of expensive field-glasses, for which, however, Joe later had to pay. Another jockey, now a trainer, once told me of an owner for whom he rode a bad jumper, giving him a packet of cigarettes to commemorate his success and mark his gratitude. The horse fell and broke his jockey's nose, but knowing the animal had been backed, the injured rider remounted and won.

The most unlikely people are often the most generous on the Turf. Fashionable jockeys expect (they don't always *receive*) a present much in excess of their fee for riding, but the total income from this source does not nearly reach the extravagant sums imagined by many, except in a few isolated cases which could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Even to-day they usually receive more from owners for five minutes on the top of winning horses than does the trainer for maybe months of preparation and anxiety. It is argued that trainers are allowed to bet and that jockeys are not, so that the former are in a position to take advantage of the successes of horses under their charge. Very few trainers die rich, very few of the jockeys who have amassed considerable wealth have kept the money they have made.

Bernard Dillon, who was a contemporary of George McCall, is another instance of those whose star was in the ascendant for a time, shone brilliantly and then was

clouded in obscurity, though he has kept before the public to a certain extent in another branch of Turf activity. He, of course, rode the 1910 Derby winner Lemberg, and was second in the same race in 1908 on the Duke of Portland's Primer. There is no doubt that at his best Dillon was a very useful jockey and a popular one. Though he often stayed at the same hotel as I did we had little contact and I have no personal memories regarding him. He won the One Thousand Guineas in 1906 on Flair and again in 1909 on Electra.

By 1904, Herbert Randall had been a professional for a couple of years. He was born February 10th, 1877, and was the son of the late Sir Henry Randall (died 1903) of Northampton. Sir Henry was connected with the boot trade and had begun to own race-horses in 1896. Herbert, keen on horses, riding and hunting from childhood, began to ride as an amateur, and, like many more, was compelled to turn professional. He had many notable successes and it took them all to atone for his disappointment at not having won the 1902 Derby on Sceptre, on which mare he won the One Thousand and Two Thousand Guineas, The Oaks and the St. Leger, and the following year he again won the first-named race on Quintessence. His name was also associated with many of the victories of that wonderful handicapper, Dean Swift.

Always a level-headed man, Herbert Randall had consummate tact, and whilst he was the professional jockey in the weighing room and never anything of the snob anywhere, his tastes and mentality were on a higher plane than many of those into whose company he was day by day thrown.

Poor Herbert Robbins was only an apprentice in those days, I fancy with Randall. I believe I am correct in saying, too, that his indentures extended over eleven years, being transferred to Charles Peck and concluded with the late John Hallick. Born January 30th, 1877, he was thus seventeen years of age when I commenced racing. A year or two later he became an able middle-weight jockey, going to scale at just over seven stones. In 1913 he rode Berrilldon (Cuthbert finished first, but

was disqualified for bumping and boring) to win the Lincolnshire Handicap. He also rode the 1920 winner of the first big handicap of the season, his mount on that occasion, Furious.

In 1916 he won the Irish Derby on Furore and the following year was second on the same horse in the Cesarewitch. Amongst his other most notable successes were those in the Ascot Stakes of 1912 (The Policeman) and again in 1922 (Double Hackle). In the same year on this useful handicapper he won the Northumberland Plate and the Prince Edward Handicap at Manchester, whilst for the late Lord Zetland he won several good races on Pomme de Terre. He took victory calmly and modestly, though when that very charming lady, the present Dowager Marchioness of Zetland, hurried from the Members' enclosure to congratulate him on winning the Great Yorkshire Stakes at York he was obviously delighted and gratified.

Latterly he didn't unbend much; he was a grave man—almost giving one the impression of nursing a secret sorrow. He told me on that occasion at York that Lady Zetland's words meant more than any present had ever done. I fancy he had a strong vein of tenderness—call it sentimentality if you will—in his make-up, and often suppressed it amongst those who would not have understood, or whom he imagined would not have understood. He died April 5th, 1927, at Lambourn, from some internal complaint. He was only forty-one, but had for some time only been riding out at exercise.

Charlie Ringstead I recall as a very tiny boy acting as whipper-in to his master, Mr. William Binnie, a Malton trainer, and a very old friend of mine. Binnie had a pack of harriers in 1904, and about this time Mr. John Brown of Marton Common, Kirbymoorside, used to mount me with the Sinnington Hounds and when Mr. Binnie was invited, to hunt over his land. Both John Brown and his brother William (particularly the latter) used to ride a good deal as amateurs both on the flat and over hurdles. Even after he had lost a leg in a shooting accident John Brown rode in and won point-to-point races, and, despite his cork leg, can still dance as well as most men in his

part of Yorkshire. He was friendly with the old school of Malton trainers and so welcomed Binnie, his harriers, and Charlie Ringstead, then the height of sixpenn'orth of copper. It was really funny to see the Master of Harriers urging on his little apprentice when a nasty place was to be jumped. It was for all the world like Jorrocks encouraging Benjamin to be "desperate keen."

Ringstead was born at Salford, Manchester, from whence, as I have previously mentioned, John Osborne used to say he liked to get his apprentices. "Scottie" (Harry) Morgan, who rode Isonomy to win the Cambridgeshire of 1878, also came from Salford. When Isonomy won the big Newmarket race it was the only outing he had that season. He started at 40 to 1 against and won easily in a field of thirty-eight.

In 1909 Charlie Ringstead won the Cambridgeshire on Christmas Daisy, who won it again the following year with Donoghue in the saddle, thus sharing the distinction with Hackler's Pride (1903 and 1904) of being the only dual winners to date of the race. As an apprentice, Ringstead was much in demand and was one of those fortunate jockeys who never had much difficulty in keeping at a handy weight. I used to see a good deal of him and always thought that at least he would be comfortably off when he retired from the saddle, for I know he was careful and banked his money. On several occasions he remarked to me as he folded up a cheque which had been handed to him as a present: "That's another brick towards my house when I retire." I fancy, however, he was very good to his family, and that some of his speculations—a picture house, and an interest in a blood-stock exporting agency—did not turn out very well.

In 1914 he had accepted a retainer to ride in Austria for Count Bernstoff, and had got nicely started in that country when war was declared and he was given twelve hours to get out of Austria. He went over to Ireland and rode there till 1916, then went to Bombay. In 1921 he rode a little for his old master, W. Binnie, then went to Spain, and from there returned to Ireland, where his health broke down. He had a long holiday at Scarborough, began to train at Beverley, then rode in

Denmark, and in 1930 was attached to Armstrong's stable at Middleham and had a few rides, but, I fancy, found his old dash was lacking. In 1932 he was back again in Denmark, then rode a bit under Pony Turf Club rules in England, and later had an interest in a riding-school. At his best he was a very good light-weight jockey with his head screwed on the right way.

The Halseys were riding well in 1904. Claude (son of William) is now a successful trainer in France, and William took up training in this country for the late Sir Ernest Cassell, when his riding days were over. William, who was born in 1867, commenced to ride under National Hunt rules at the age of thirteen. In 1901 he won the City and Suburban on Australian Star, and the same year won the Two Thousand Guineas on Handicapper. He was one of the first jockeys to ride with distinction both on the flat and under National Hunt rules, being second on Pan to Ilex in the 1890 Grand National and on Barsac was second to Ambush II in the same race in 1900. He married a daughter of the late J. Watts, in his day a fine jockey who between 1887 and 1892 was only once out of the leading three jockeys in the championship list. Will Halsey was second in that list in 1902 (115 wins), third 1903 (106 wins) and third again 1907 (110 wins).

He was a powerful jockey, very determined, and one of what we have come to call the "old school" of horse-men. It was always a pleasure to watch him ride a finish. He invariably seemed to get the last ounce out of a horse and was one of the few jockeys I have heard frankly admit when they feel they have ridden a bad race. I have heard a few confess quite candidly that they have made mistakes, and tell the owner or trainer they should not have been beaten. He who never makes mistakes never makes anything, and I should imagine that Bill Halsey made fewer than most of his contemporaries. He was implicitly trusted and one never heard a whisper of suspicion about his riding or conduct on the Turf. Perhaps this is a more suspicious and talkative age, anyhow we cannot say that some of our present-day leading jockeys are immune from (maybe irresponsible) suggestions.

Possibly some of them invite the head-shakings and whisperings of the imaginative babblers because of their misguided and open association with men who, in some cases, are rather Turf mysteries, in others of not too desirable reputation, in yet others are too much concerned with the betting ring for it to be wise for a jockey to be seen frequently in their company. I pity anyone not in authority who had ventured to, in his hearing, suggest that Halsey was in anyone's pocket, or that he had been guilty of anything which was not fair and square and above board. He was quick tempered, could use his fists, his eyes could flash fire, and, on occasion, his tongue could cut like a whip.

The County of Durham has provided the Turf with very few jockeys. With the exception of Warne and H. Jamieson I cannot recall another who has gained any measure of success except Joe Thwaites, who was born at Stockton-on-Tees in 1891. The son of a shipyard worker, Thwaites was an apprentice in 1904. He gave up riding at the end of 1933, and in addition to taking an hotel at Brompton, near Scarborough, began to write racing matter for a number of Northern newspapers. Thwaites was for long one of the tallest jockeys riding and at the same time one of the best liked. When he relinquished his licence he wrote his life story for a North-country Sunday journal and began by saying: "I was trained in a hard school, and, I think, a better school than we have to-day. It was the time when jockeys were all pals together. When one would help a pal to keep his job and not, as to-day, do anything to get his mounts."

At the age of ten he went to Rowland Carter's stables at Chantilly, France, as an apprentice. He continued his narrative thus: "I only weighed four stones, and they had to make me a special saddle. I stayed there twelve months; one of the happiest periods in my life. We were not paid any money, so at night I would slip into one of the cafés in the town and sing in English. The patrons were tickled and I used to get what was to me a small fortune—threepence or fourpence a night. . . . Then Mr. Carter died and I decided to come back to

England. I was given £10. My one idea was to keep it intact and give it to my mother. Back in England and not yet eleven. I couldn't go into racing until I was fourteen. About a week before which time I saw an advertisement for boys : ' Apply to Captain—(now Sir John)—Renwick at Dunbar.' I wrote. I didn't get any reply so I packed my box and just went. I well remember my first meeting with Sir John, who turned out to be one of my best friends. He was more like a father to me and I can't calculate how much of my success I owe to him ! ”

Thwaites was twenty before he first rode in public, his first mount being at Hamilton Park, and his second at Thirsk. This latter was a winner as were his next two mounts. Then came an incident in his life of which I do not recall a parallel. In 1912 he won a race at Epsom on Mrs. (now Lady) Renwick's Kiburnie, but the Stewards themselves laid an objection on the grounds that Thwaites' indentures had expired prior to the race, so that he was no longer entitled to ride as an apprentice. Kilburnie was disqualified, but Captain Renwick appealed to the Stewards of the Jockey Club, producing the jockey's birth certificate which proved the date on the indentures made him a year older than he was. The disqualification was duly removed—a most unusual course.

In 1926 Thwaites became first jockey to Lord Glanely and had a successful season, buying Heath View, Newmarket, the following year from Mrs. Rodrigo, widow of the Newmarket training reporter. In 1927 he rode Insight II in the Cambridgeshire, and will believe to his dying day that he won the race though only placed third. In 1928 he was riding as a free-lance, lived at Redcar, and occasionally whipped in to Captain J. Renwick who at that time was Master of the Staintondale Hounds. In 1929 he was associated with Harold Bazley's Malton stable, and when riding for it he had a serious accident at Stockton—one of the three bad “ smashes up ” during his career. He was kicked, but continued to ride, though on returning to Malton he vomited pints of blood. A specialist who was called in said that if the jockey had

not had a constitution of iron he would never have lived.

When Joe returned to racing he related an amusing story to me. One of the Maltonians who had called to see him comforted him by saying: "Well, I can tell you *this*; if you don't get better you'll have the biggest — funeral there's ever been in Malton." Thwaites took out a licence to ride under National Hunt Rules, but after one ride at Sedgefield he did not repeat the experiment. Fond of his garden, of hunting, and billiards and really a lover of horses (I am afraid few jockeys *are*), he would have done well as a trainer, but he weighed up the position in view of his own knowledge of the difficulties and anxieties which come the way of trainers, and decided against continuing his Turf career in this direction.

His own words on the subject are:

"If a trainer or jockey is not continually in the lime-light, no matter what his capabilities, he is soon forgotten. *Don't I know it!* Trainers make bad debts and have all expenses to meet whether they are paid or not. The business is overdone, there being far too many trainers, and then again, the owners of to-day are far different from when I first got into the game. There were men in it then who knew as much about horses as the jockey did himself and could tell immediately what was wrong, or what was not wrong with a jockey's riding. Nowadays we have a certain number of the newly rich taking part in the game. They don't know the first thing about racing."

So Joe now "travels the meetings" and is found in the Press room rather than in the weighing-room. Instead of riding winners he tries to "find" them for the public. The latter is often as difficult as the former, and just as great a strain.

A number of other jockeys who were riding in 1904 will be spoken of in the chapter dealing with trainers. Unlike Joe Thwaites, they immediately took to training when increasing weight and increasing years compelled them to give up riding. I must mention Johnny Murray, who Mr. "Bob" Armstrong always says was the best apprentice he ever had. This is all the more interesting

as Murray was one of the many recent instances of boys who had no connection with horses making a brilliant jockey. He was the son of a Sunderland sailor and all his forebears had been connected with the sea.

Mr. Armstrong had Murray, Crisp, Sharples and Howey all at the same time at Penrith. The first named commenced to ride in public in 1902 and was soon in demand. One of his first rides was at the Carlisle summer meeting of 1902 and one of his first winners was on Turin in the Renfrew Handicap at Paisley that year. So light was he that Mr. Armstrong had to have a special saddle made for him to save carrying so much lead. The Middleham trainer tells me he still has the saddle and that when Murray was riding at weights between 9 stones and 10 stones, the saddle together with an accompanying weight-cloth were more than he could carry, so that the permission of the Stewards had to be secured when he won for some one else to bring the saddle and additional leads to scale. This, of course, was in view of the rule that except under extraordinary circumstances no one must touch a jockey or his equipment after he has won a race. There were some scandals exposed of jockeys being handed weight, or loaded whips, when they came in after winning to make up for the weight they had ridden short in the race, hence the rule. John Murray rode a lot of winners and eventually became light-weight to the Rothschild stable. He died from a chill at the early age of twenty-eight.

Reverting to the point of Murray never having had anything to do with horses prior to going into stables at Penrith, it is remarkable how few of the most successful riders on the flat in this century can claim a drop of horsey blood in their veins, or any previous experience of riding before they were apprenticed by some trainer.

This, of course, is the exact opposite to the conditions in the early days of the Turf when those who rode were selected by local noblemen and squires because of the aptitude shown at home. The "feather-weights" were usually sons of "training grooms," or men about the hunting stables at hall or castle, or village lads who had been seen to shape well on ponies at local fairs,

feasts and sports. Being able to ride, having displayed dash and courage, they had less to learn and less to unlearn than have apprentices in these days of entirely altered style of race riding. Indeed, one sometimes wonders if a little knowledge acquired by boys is not a dangerous thing and a detriment when they go into racing stables; that is, if they are lucky enough to get with one of the few trainers who seem to take any trouble with their boys. Only about 1 per cent of these lads ever make jockeys and a considerable number never really get an opportunity of showing what they are made of. It is good horses which often make good jockeys, and it is the good luck to have the riding of them which gives boys a chance.

I have no doubt that there are Donoghues, Richardses and Nevetts hidden away in lots of training stables. They only have an occasional mount and then it is often on something which is more likely to do their reputation harm than to bring them into the limelight. In France, of course, they have a system of encouraging trainers to make jockeys and to give them plenty of public riding. There the Société de Sport de France (which runs Le Tremblay meeting) awards a premium to the trainer who turns out the greatest number of winning rides in apprentice races. In this country apprentice races are not beloved, and a few "fashionable" lads get most of the riding. They are often the best "horses," so far as £ s. d. goes, the trainer has in his stable.

Ernest Sadgrove, whom I saw in 1934 at Pontefract, and who has now a little boy of his own riding, was an apprentice when I commenced racing. He is now head man for Briscoe.

A. Flanagan was another apprentice in 1904. He was attached to Peacock's stable at Middleham and seemed to get a lot of riding. I sometimes see him at meetings leading a horse round for a South-country trainer. Other apprentices of that day I have lost sight of altogether. Possibly they are "doing their two" in stables somewhere. Maybe, heart-sore and full of disappointment, they left the racing game entirely.

As a matter of fact, very few do this; once they have

caught the Turf contagion they find it difficult to get rid of it, and in some capacity or other—sometimes as floatsam and jetsam—they continue to “travel the meetings.”

It was my original intention to take up training as a profession and, as I have said, I spent three happy years of my life learning the art and mysteries of the behind the scenes of the Turf. Instead I turned to sporting journalism and, after the War, became a licensed Turf official. In all these connections men and horses have interested me most and it is my memories and impressions of the former with which the succeeding chapters will mainly deal.

CHAPTER III

MORE ABOUT JOCKEYS

UNDOUBTEDLY the best of the American riders who descended upon the English Turf was Daniel Aloysius Maher, whom I knew well. Maher, who was of Irish descent with all the Irishman's inherent love of a horse, was born at Hartford, Connecticut, October 29th, 1881. Though he never served an apprenticeship to his profession of race-riding he had racing blood in his veins. His uncle, Michael Daly, was a well-known American trainer, and he it was who gave him his first chance.

At the age of fourteen he was riding on the American tracks. His second mount, Phœbus, at the Providence Rhode Island, meeting, proved a winner and in three seasons he rode 350 winners before coming to England. He was not yet nineteen when he emigrated to this country in which he had his first mount—incidentally a winning one—on Mr. McCrerry's Paiute at Manchester. Maher regarded this as a good omen; be that as it may, he quickly came into prominence in the country which he was in 1913 to adopt as his own. Leading owners and trainers soon recognised that Maher possessed abilities much above the ordinary. His unostentatious manner, his God-given gift of hands, his wonderful judgment of pace, and his artistry of finish combined to make Maher the consummate and perfect horseman he was.

Among either his compatriots or his English contemporaries he had no equal in the handling of a two-year-old, which was reminiscent of Tom Cannon at his best. He was soon riding for the leading stables of that era, including that of Stanley House, over which the Hon. George Lambton was consul, P. Peck (then training for



THE AUTHOR AS JUDGE

the late Lord Rosebery) and the all-powerful Manton establishment of Mr. Alec Taylor. Maher won every Classic race in the *Calendar*, some of them more than once, as will be seen from his record given in detail later. Standing out cameo-like in his career is the series of contests which took place between the three-year-olds Neil Gow and Lemberg in 1910. The former, owned by Lord Rosebery, was ridden by Maher, while the latter, the property of Mr. Cox (then racing as "Mr. Fairie"), was ridden by Bernard Dillon.

The pair met in the Two Thousand Guineas, in which the primrose and rose hoops of the Earl of Rosebery were borne first past the post by a short head from the Manton colt. The pair met again in the Derby won by Lemberg, with Neil Gow (interfered with by the fall of the American-owned and ridden Sir Martin) unplaced. What was regarded by many as the decider took place at Sandown Park, where both colts were engaged in the Eclipse Stakes. At the end of a gruelling race up the straight, the two horses, both running as straight as the proverbial gun-barrels, flashed past the post locked together in a dead-heat—truly an appropriate finish to the rubber.

Throughout his career on the English Turf only in one solitary instance was his riding viewed with suspicion. This "incident" took place at Leicester, at which meeting he rode a "dog-horse" named Sallust, for Lord Rosebery. His mount started hot favourite, but finished down the course and the local Stewards reported Maher to the Jockey Club, who, in dismissing the complaint, exonerated the popular Danny from all blame. In the interim he was miserable and he never rode at that particular Midland meeting again. As a tangible proof of confidence in his jockey that grand old sportsman, Lord Rosebery, presented Maher with a gold watch inscribed "A mark of esteem" and bearing the date of the Leicester meeting. At the end of the season, he took him for a cruise on his yacht. If Maher had a weakness it was his proneness to "cut" a finish to the finest possible margin. This was not in his case playing to the gallery, but rather confidence in his judgment of pace.

His finishes were always problematical and misleading even to the Argus-eyed handicappers, and there is little doubt that Maher frequently won by a short head when one of the "all arms and whip" brigade would have set his mount alight at the distance and would have won by, what is known in racing parlance, as a "street." Like Thwaites, Maher had one mount under National Hunt Rules when he rode Mr. H. M. Hartigan's Dabila a winner in the Staines Handicap Hurdle Plate at Kempton Park.

Reverting to his record of winning rides, his best year, as will be seen from the following statistics, was in his native country in 1898 when he rode 191 winners out of 512 mounts. The year following he rode 103 out of 368 mounts, whilst in his third and last season in America, he rode 56 winners out of a possible 274. In England his record was as follows :

Year.	Wins.	Mounts.
1900	27	128
1901	94	418
1902	106	451
1903	56	198
1904	115	462
1905	101	411
1906	103	353
1907	114	424
1908	139	491
1909	116	423
1910	127	460
1911	99	436
1912	109	443
1913	115	424

It is only fair to the memory of this great little horseman to state that when, in 1903, he only rode 56 winners he was laid aside for several weeks as the result of a motoring accident which all but cost him his life. In this country Maher rode 1421 winners and 350 in America with the remarkably fine average of 111 winners per season. Maher came to England at a period when American jockeys and their style were not popular here,

and at a time when few thought they would ever return to favour. Maher, more than J. H. Martin and Lucien Lyne, changed this attitude. Writing in 1901 dear old George Hodgman said :

“ Had anybody, some ten years ago, dared to hint that the first season of the twentieth century would see American jockeys in such demand in England as by their presence to be a serious danger to the livelihood of many of the home school, his alleged foolishness would have been held a fit matter for ridicule. Yet the apparently impossible change has come to pass and there are no signs of any abatement of the invasion ; rather, the reverse is threatened. In truth, to judge by American communications, the United States will soon be denuded of its leading professionals, the offers emanating from English owners being of irresistible character. That there are here and there English owners firm believers in the old school must be allowed. But the great trend of opinion runs solid for the Yankees when they preserve the proprieties. If the present state of affairs is satisfactory to the English division, then indeed are they easy to please.”

Danny Maher I always found a most interesting and amusing companion. He had the wit to learn that it paid him to adapt himself to the manners of this country, and he succeeded in doing so. His private life was always much more restrained and sensible than that of Sloan. The temperaments of the two men were totally dissimilar, for Maher never struck one as being conceited or spoiled in any way by the flattery or attentions of the great of the earth. He was eventually compelled to hand in his colours owing to ill health in 1913, though in September, 1915, he was persuaded to ride Sun Yat in the Friswell Handicap at Newmarket. It was unfortunate that the “ come back ” was not marked by victory.

As has been previously stated, he rode the winners of all the Classic races and was three times successful in the Derby. His successes in the Classics were : 1901, One Thousand Guineas (Aida) ; 1903, Derby and St. Leger (Rock Sand) ; 1905, Derby (Cicero) ; 1906, Derby (Spearmint) ; 1905, Oaks (Keystone II) ; 1909, St. Leger

(Bayardo); 1910, Two Thousand Guineas (Neil Gow); 1912, Two Thousand Guineas (Sweeper II).

It was lung trouble which caused him to retire, but after a trip abroad he felt so much better he married in 1914, and spent a good deal of time with another ex-jockey, George Williamson, hunting in the Midlands. Maher loved the excitement and sporting brotherhood of the chase, and more than once said to me that "so far as sport and true friendship goes, hunting knocks racing into a cocked hat." He died in a London nursing home at the end of 1916—a gentleman and a sportsman.

Before he retired, indeed whilst yet in his heyday and yet something of the public idol which Steve Donoghue has been for a decade, Maher saw another brilliant jockey importation (not this time from America) in the person of Frank Wootton. This chubby-faced, remarkable boy soon made his mark. I saw a good deal of "Old Man" Richard Wootton and of Frank in the latter's early days and am convinced that, apart from his own natural abilities, there was a contributory reason to his success. Whether he came away to meetings with his father or someone else he was carefully chaperoned, and, whilst other boys were passing merry evenings ("a short life and a gay one"), he was tucked up in bed fast asleep. The result was that he always went on to a race-course feeling and looking fit, with no traces of "the night before" in his eyes, his manner, or his brain. The same could not be said of some others who had spent their evenings in wild excitement, in fusty theatres, in riotous fun in billiard saloons and worse!

There was nothing of the Puritan or kill-joy about Richard Wootton, and there was nothing of the spoilt child, the prig, or the exclusive snob about Frank Wootton. There was firmly bred in the minds of both, however, that Frank was to go up to the top of the tree and that to accomplish this meant denials, and following a different routine to that common amongst jockeys when he commenced to ride. I don't say there was anything vicious about many of the other boys, but I can recall very well midnight scenes of a type I tried to describe in my Turf novel, *A Rank Outsider*.

As a boy, Frank Wootton was a respectful, quiet and well-behaved youth, a good listener, and not given to talking much himself. This is rather a trait of all the Colonials I have met who have come over here to make money on the English Turf. They have been secretive, not so much because they wanted to "put off" those amongst whom they mixed, or yet "put them in the cart," but rather because they have learned (and profited by the lesson) that the man who says little about racing, riding and training is generally credited with knowing a good deal more than he really does know, whilst those who "open their mouths" are put down as knowing nothing, or being wilful deceivers, when their honest expectations do not materialise.

Frank Wootton, then, was trained to say little about anything, and nothing about his engagements except to those who had a right to ask him. Of course, he was pointed out, and might have been lionised—indeed he might easily have been spoilt—at hotels at which he stayed. I don't know that he had any leanings in that direction. At any rate, he was too carefully shepherded to allow his brain to be turned. At the height of his successes he was just as modest a lad as when he began his first season. Indeed, I fancy to be reticent and retiring became almost second nature to him in his young days. There was nothing of hero-worship in it, for it was prior to him making a name for himself, but I was interested from his start in this dark-eyed, rather pasty-faced, silent boy and find the following entry in my diary for 1906 :

"Stayed at the same hotel as Frank Wootton. He had come to ride Aurina in the Prince Edward Handicap and won it by half a length, beating Lynham on Polymelus and Madden on Kuroki. He is not yet quite thirteen, as he tells me he was born on December 14th, 1893. He won his first race on a pony when he was eleven, this being in South Africa. He was deeply interested on the course in everything which went on, and is obviously a boy who wants to learn and doesn't 'know it all' at the start. He rode his first winner here last month at Folkestone on his father's Retrieve, and there has been a good deal of talk about him amongst those who are

capable of judging. He hasn't been allowed to get up in public till it was certain he would go straight ahead. He is remarkably quick at the 'gate,' and seems to be part of his horse. He is bound to make a name for himself."

And again early in 1907 I recorded my impressions: "Frank Wootton's reputation is secure. His quickness, his beautiful hands, his brilliant finishes, his dash, and the fact that some horses notorious as 'thieves,' 'rogues' and difficult to ride, go well for him, have ensured this. He is a solemn boy, but his solemnity is an affectation, in so much as it is forced suppression. His only outlet for his buoyancy and the spirits seems to be in his races."

It has always been a surprise to me that Frank Wootton's "Life" has never been written. His achievements certainly warranted it and probably others had as vivid impressions as I had and even greater opportunities of close contact. Maybe others noted down these impressions as I did.

His "Life" never has been written. Let me now say he was born at Sydney and came to England with his younger brother Stanley in 1906. Richard Wootton and family settled at Treadwell House, Epsom, and for many years their establishment was in the limelight. Indeed the name of Wootton seemed to obsess the Turf, the Press, conversation in the clubs, paddocks, on railway journeys, in pubs and I suppose at street corners. How Frank jumped right to the front with both feet will be seen from the following table showing his successes during the eight years he rode on the flat:

Year.	Mounts.	Wins
1906	67	16
1907	282	39
1908	602	129
1909	777	165
1910	630	137
1911	747	187
1912	438	118
1913	323	91
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3866	882

I should doubt if there is another instance of a still successful jockey retiring from the flat at the age of twenty as Frank Wootton did in 1913. He had grown tall, had had to waste hard, and had met with many checks in his meteoric career. Periods during which he was compulsorily inactive prevented him from heading the list of successful jockeys during the whole of his brief, brilliant and historic epoch. It is interesting to recall the tables during the latter part of that period. They are here :

1908. D. Maher 139 wins; F. Wootton 129 wins;
W. Higgs 124 wins.
1909. F. Wootton 165 wins; D. Maher 116 wins;
W. Higgs, 101 wins.
1910. F. Wootton, 165 wins; D. Maher, 127 wins;
C. Trigg, 95 wins.
1911. F. Wootton 118 wins; C. Trigg 111 wins;
D. Maher 99 wins.
1912. F. Wootton 118 wins; D. Maher 109 wins; A.
Whalley 99 wins.
1913. D. Maher 115 wins; F. Wootton 91 wins;
A. Whalley 86 wins.

Then came the even more remarkable era of Steve Donoghue. The dash, the often superb horsemanship, the power to what is called "lift a horse," his remarkable insistence to have the rails, were all admired in Frank Wootton. He was cheered, and, of course, made something of an idol. Nevertheless I don't think he ever captured the imagination, albeit affection, of the public like Donoghue did. Even Richards has not succeeded in doing that. Possibly no one can quite explain the *raison d'être*. Certainly I can't. There is something mesmeric in the frank, open, understandable personality of Donoghue, an indescribable inwardness which radiates from him and draws all classes to his feet. It is there as certain as God made little apples, but I cannot either diagnose or define it, though I have tried to solve the problem aforetime, as I have prior to writing this particular page of this book.

Had it not been for his enforced absence from the saddle whilst under the displeasure of the ruling authorities Frank Wootton would have won the Derby of 1910 on Lemberg. His career closed with only two classic successes, those of Perola in the Oaks of 1909, and the St. Leger of 1910, which he won on Swynford. His last winning mount on the flat was the late Sir E. Hulton's Fairy King in the Autumn Plate at Warwick. On the outbreak of war he went to the East as a soldier and it was there he first got a liking for riding over the sticks. He rode several winners at Baghdad and on November 20th, 1920, had his first mount over hurdles in this country at Birmingham. He finished third, but the same afternoon he won the Burton Handicap Hurdle on Bobby-dazzler.

The following year (1921) he headed the list of winning jockeys under N.H. rules with sixty-one successes, all of which were in hurdle races. He continued to ride under these rules until 1923, steering a good many winners for bluff Tom Coulthwaite, who often criticised him as I fancy Frank would, towards the end of his career on the flat, have allowed no one to do. I always thought that Frank Wootton's hurdling was more in the nature of a hobby and frolic than anything else. He picked his mounts, would have nothing to do with steeplechasing, didn't need the fees and saw no fun in risking his neck or even a broken limb, as so many cross-country jockeys do week by week. In 1923 he went back to Australia and spent some time on his father's farm, then returned to this country to assist his brother Stanley at Treadwell House. We have not seen much of him on race-courses since then.

Stanley Thomas Wootton was born at Sydney, June 28th, 1897. He came to this country, as has already been stated, when the family migrated from down under to Epsom. Though he rode with success, he never reached the pinnacle which brother Frank occupied, and perhaps his most notable success was in the 1910 Chester Cup which he won on Elizabetta, trained by Alec Taylor, for whose stable he rode. Like his brother he served with the colours in the East, and when he was

demobilised he assumed the rôle of trainer at Treadwell House.

One of his first patrons was the newspaper magnate, the late Sir E. Hulton, for whom Wootton *père* had trained so many winners. When the Pale White Horseman beckoned to James East, Moss Vernon, for whom East had trained, became a patron of Treadwell House stable. Stanley Wootton quickly got into his stride as a trainer, and in the season 1926 he saddled no fewer than eighty-four winners. The following year he negotiated a business deal of considerable magnitude when he purchased all the principal gallops on Epsom Downs. This gave him a taste for finance and it was freely rumoured that he would relinquish his licence in order to take up a financial career, but this proved ill-founded and he still holds a licence to train. I emphasised in a previous chapter that lads who had aspirations to become jockeys were lucky to get into the stables of those few trainers who took trouble to train and develop jockeys.

A boy who gets into the Wootton stable is trebly fortunate, as Wootton is a past master in the moulding of jockeys. Indeed, it is probable that he possesses as much skill in training horsemen as he does in training horses. Among the many good lads which have been turned out of the Wootton Academy are the Smirkes, Stafford Ingham, J. Marshall, Leslie Cordell, R. Dick, J. Sirett and Sean Magee. Billy Stott, the cross-country jockey, also owes much of his success to the Wootton tuition.

I have had scores of letters in my time from jockeys during the last three decades and, though I would not say they are illiterate, I *would* say that pen and paper are not their strong point. Some of them can do little more than sign their own names. To string a few sentences together is a labour, and not one of love. Of course there are exceptions, and I am speaking generally. Nevertheless, when I see some newspaper or publisher announcing that a jockey has written his "life" and memories for the benefit, or at any rate amusement, of the public, I am inclined to smile. I used to be astonished until I knew more of the behind the scenes mysteries

both of the Turf and the literary worlds. Stephen Donoghue is the author of a very interesting book of memories, to which several additional vital chapters could now be added. Maybe Donoghue made the mistake of not waiting to make his reminiscences his swan-song as a jockey. This most popular jockey will probably go on riding for some years yet, and will even then not be the age of many of the old-time riders who continued in the saddle till they were indeed veterans.

Born at Warrington, Lancs, on October 15th, 1884, Donoghue commenced his racing life with the late John Porter at Kingsclere, from whence he ran away. He then tackled Dobson Peacock at Stockton Races, and persuaded him to take him into his stable at Middleham. Steve gave an assumed name owing to the fear that he would be arrested for the murder of a bully he had thrashed in Lancashire, and whom he fancied he had killed. As a matter of fact the bully was only stunned, and there was actually no hue and cry for Donoghue. It was when the census man came round at Middleham that Steve thought discovery of his *alias* was imminent and he again absconded. He and the veteran Middleham trainer have often laughed about this since. A close friendship has for years existed between them and I know that Mr. Peacock regrets that an unfortunate unfounded fear robbed him of such a capable horseman.

Steve's next experience was in France when he entered Edward Johnson's stable at Chantilly. From there he went to George Dodd, La Morlaye, and finally to John Moore, Marseilles. His first winner in France was on M. Trabaud's Hanoi, in April, 1905, at Hyères. From France he went to Ireland where he became associated with Philip Behan at the Mountjoy Lodge stable. It was at the 1908 Liverpool Spring Meeting that he had his first mount in England, this being Christine, on which he finished third. His first winner, however, was not long deferred, for at the same meeting he "caught the eye of the judge" on Mr. Behan's Golden Rod, a horse which afterwards won the Goodwood Stewards' Cup on two occasions.

It was not until two years later that he had his first ride

in the English Derby when he rode Charles O'Malley into third place behind Lemberg and Greenback. In the season 1911 he had commenced to ride regularly in this country, having accepted a retainer to ride as first jockey for "Atty" Persse's stable. It was while riding for Persse that Donoghue became associated with one of the most famous horses of the twentieth century. At the 1912 Doncaster Sales "Atty" Persse bought for the—in the light of after events—insignificant sum of 1300 guineas, a Roi Herode colt which he later passed on to his then patron, Colonel McCalmont.

This colt, from his peculiar markings (he was, as described by Donoghue, "a sort of elephant grey with big splotches of lime colour, as though someone had splashed him all over with handfuls of wet lime that had stuck and dried on him"), was facetiously dubbed "the rocking horse" and the "spotted wonder." But "handsome is that handsome does," and during his only season on the Turf he was never beaten. On the Chattis Hill colt Donoghue won the following races: Woodcote Stakes (Epsom), Coventry Stakes (Ascot), National Breeders' Produce Plate (Sandown Park), Rous Memorial Stakes (Goodwood), Champion Breeders' Foal Plate (Derby), Champagne Stakes (Doncaster), and the National Breeders' Foal Stakes (Sandown Park). This wonder horse succumbed to training troubles and was thus unable to take part in the 1914 Derby.

Donoghue has a unique record in the Derby, of which race he has not only ridden the winner on six occasions, but also has achieved the "hat trick." Remarkable as this record is it does not beat that of Robinson, who, between 1817 and 1836 rode six Derby winners over the Epsom track. Included in Donoghue's performance are two war-time substitute Derbies run at Newmarket.

Apart from that, however, Donoghue's record, which is as follows, is not likely to be surpassed: 1915, Pommern (Newmarket); 1917, Gay Grusader (Newmarket); 1921, Humorist; 1922, Captain Cuttle; 1923, Papyrus; 1925, Manna. His many successes at Epsom are in all probability due to his absolute fearlessness on this track,

to his ability to balance a horse over the gradient, and to driving his mounts at full pace down the hill to Tattenham Corner at a stage when least energy is expended. He has ridden the winners of almost every important race under Jockey Club rules, and among the many which have fallen to him are the following: 1918, The Oaks (My Dear); 1925, French Oaks (Aquatinte II); Two Thousand Guineas, 1915 (Pommern), 1917 (Gay Crusader), 1925 (Manna); City and Suburban Handicap, 1919 (Royal Bucks), 1926 (Warden of the Marches), 1927 (Embargo); Chester Cup, 1915 (Hare Hill); St. Leger, 1915 (Pommern), 1917 (Gay Crusader); Lincolnshire Handicap, 1922 (Granely), 1925 (Tapin); Cesarewitch, 1916 (Sanctum), 1920 (Bracket); Cambridgeshire, 1910 (Christmas Daisy), 1914 (Honeywood), and 1915 (Silver Tag); Kempton Park Jubilee Handicap, 1923 (Diligence dead-heated with Simon Pure); Manchester Cup, 1917 (Blue Danube war-time substitute), 1921 (March Along), 1922 (North Waltham); Royal Hunt Cup, 1922 (Square Measure); Stewards' Cup, Goodwood (Lord Annandale dead-heat with Golden Sun); Middle Park Stakes, 1921 (Golden Corn); Liverpool Autumn Cup, 1919 (My Dear), 1920 (Square Measure), 1921 (Crevasse); Manchester November Handicap, 1927 (Old Orkney), 1928 (Saracen).

Mention has already been made of one "wonder" horse with which Donoghue was associated, but these reminiscences of Steve would be incomplete if no reference were made to Brown Jack, who, but for his interest and advice, would never have become the public idol he was. His story has made an equine romance in the excellent hands of that delightful writer Mr. R. C. Lyle.

In practically the whole of his victories Donoghue rode Brown Jack, one of the exceptions being the Chester Cup. In this race Beary had the mount, owing to Donoghue being laid aside with a broken leg.

At the end of his racing career, which coincided with his success at Ascot, Brown Jack was retired from the Turf and last season was ridden to hounds by Lady Zia Wernher and her husband, who was joint-Master of the Fernie Hunt, a position Lady Zia now holds.

From and including the year 1914 to and inclusive of the year 1922, Donoghue headed the list of winning jockeys, and in 1923 he tied with C. Elliot, both having ridden eighty-nine winners. Steve has had a varied experience of racing in many countries, including America, having accompanied the 1923 Derby winner, Papyrus, to that country when Mr. Ben Irish's horse engaged the American champion Zev in several contests in which the English horse was beaten by his inability to race over the mud tracks. Donoghue has been twice married: (1) to a daughter of his old employer, P. Behan; (2) to Miss Ethel Finn, a music-hall artiste (the daughter of an American barrister) whom he married in March, 1929. He has not, by any means, had all plain sailing in his riding career, as, in addition to other anxious times in 1925, his shoulder was broken by the fall of the French Oaks winner Aquatinte II, in the Grand Prix, and four years later he sustained a broken ankle when Polyphonia unseated him while on the way to the post for the Hurstbourne Stakes, at the Bibury Club meeting. The following year he had his leg broken when Pamplona fell in a race at Nottingham, an accident which kept him out of the saddle for many weeks. He paid a second visit to America at the end of 1931 and was urged to remain in that country to ride the Australian crack Phar Lap.

Donoghue thinks Gay Crusader (destroyed September 19th, 1932, at the age of nineteen) was the best horse he ever rode. I always think that there is something sad about Donoghue's face when in repose. This applies to many Irishmen, and those of Irish extraction. Of course, with all his brilliant successes, and all the money he has had through his hands, Steve has had his financial worries and ups and downs. Life has not been altogether smooth, or a bed of roses for him. Indeed it is so for very few who are drawn into the Turf vortex and have to spend their lives there. It is a hard life in which the successes sometimes do not atone for the disappointments, and in which those who have been trusted as friends turn out to have been only sycophants, toadies and suckers. Still there is some truth in what Harriet Lady Ashburton said

years ago : "I would go to the Turf to get my friends. They seem to me the only people who really hold close together. I don't know why ; it may be each knows something that might hang the other, but the effect is altogether delightful and peculiar."

Pat Donoghue was soon too heavy to attain anything approaching his father's success, even if he had had the ability. Pat always struck me as something of a dreamer, lacking the alertness of his father. As a matter of fact there are very few sons of great jockeys who have found the mantle of their fathers has fallen on them. Why ? They have special advantages because of the name they bear, according to psycho-analysis theories they should have an added confidence and the influence of superiority complex.

According to inherency theories they should be born with some of their father's skill as a natural legacy. Contrariwise we often find too much is expected of the sons of great horsemen, or that the saddle has no appeal. Somehow the cross has not nicked. It is just the same in bloodstock breeding as with *genus homo*. Progeny is a lottery and no rules, figures, systems or expectations are infallible in either. It is often the unexpected that happens. I remember Steve's pride when young Pat began to ride. His first mount was at Salisbury in 1924 on Lady Torrington's Nice One. Pat wasn't then 14 and weighed 5 st. He was at Chafyn Grove School near Salisbury, at which he took a prominent part in the school athletic curriculum and was captain of the Rugby football XV, captain of the games, champion swimmer and was a good boxer. He served the first part of his apprenticeship with C. Bartholomew, his indentures being subsequently transferred to Stanley Wootton.

A month after he had his first mount, young Pat had the pleasure of riding his first winner in the Doddington High-Weight Handicap at Bath. When only fifteen years of age he rode one of the most sensational winners of the Lincolnshire Handicap, this being the 100 to 1 King of Clubs, trained in the north by W. Bellerby, the Hambleton trainer.¹ Increasing weight terminated Pat's

¹ Moved to Whitewall, Malton, June 1935.

career on the flat and he took out a licence to ride under N.H. rules, having his first season with George Duller. In 1931 he rode with success in America, but returned to this country in December of that year and is now training under Pony Turf Club Rules.

Albert Whalley ("Snowy" as he was and is always called) was, like Donoghue, Caldwell and many other jockeys, born in Lancashire—really one of the least "horsey" counties in England. March 25th, 1889, was the date of his nativity, and on leaving school he was apprenticed to Alfred Hayhoe at the time that trainer had charge of Mr. L. de Rothschild's horses at Palace House, Newmarket. Whalley, hard-bitten and keen though he was, never got a chance as an apprentice. In this he was only like many other lads of ability. The patrons of the stables with which they are connected possibly insist on putting up boys who have made a reputation, even though they may have better material on their doorstep. The trainer may know this, but unless he is a man of means and has a number of horses of his own on to which he can put his own boys, he may have no opportunity of proving their merits.

Anyway, "Snowy" Whalley was a disappointed and discouraged youth when his apprenticeship was ended, and decided to turn his back on the Turf. He tried his luck on the stage, but found the Turf lodestone too strong for him and after a while became associated with that grand old Doncaster sportsman, the late James Milnthorpe. He was a rough diamond, interested in brewing, owner of an old sporting Doncaster hotel, breeding bloodstock in a small way, and was also for some years a trainer. He was considered an astute man and more than once told me "I maks racing mair than pay for itself." Probably he did. Probably, too, he was one of the few men in a small way who have succeeded in doing so.

Afterwards Whalley was with Jack Raisin at Beverley, and Couch at Newmarket. Both these were also men I knew intimately. Raisin was like a cock sparrow, just as pertinacious and just as knowing. He and Jim Bell, Moseley and others, had, a few years before, had a great time with a few horses at Hambleton, and when the

confederacy broke up Raisin never seemed to more than touch the fringe of racing again, though he occasionally popped up at unexpected times and in unexpected places with a horse. He looked more like a little commercial traveller than a racing man, but no one could teach him much he didn't know about every phase of the great Turf game.

I fancy it was when he was with Couch that Whalley had a bad smash-up when riding a school over hurdles. He was laid aside for some time and then met Mumford, who persuaded him to return to India with him. It was in that country that Whalley rode his first winner at the age of twenty-three. He then went straight ahead and rode the big winner of every race in India with the exception of the Viceroy's Cup. In 1911 he returned to England to show us that although he had never had a chance as a kid, he could ride winners. The following year (1912) he was third to Frank Wootton and D. Maher in the jockeys' list, his own score being ninety-nine, just ten below that of Maher.

In 1913 he was third again. Mr. L. de Rothschild, who had never realised he was a jockey as a boy, had secured first claim on his services in 1911, and for that sportsman he continued to ride till Mr. de Rothschild's death in 1917. Afterwards he rode for Lords Anglesey, Durham and Glanely. Although lots of winners came his way the classics eluded him and I know that he felt this. It is the ambition of all jockeys to score in "big" races, even though they sometimes take less skill to win than a little selling plate. They set a seal of distinction upon jockey, trainer and owner, and it is for this, more than the pretty useful presents which come to the successful rider, that "Snowy" Whalley aimed.

Not, however, till 1919 was his ambition realised. He then won the One Thousand Guineas on the late Sir Edward Hulton's Roseway, and in the same year he won the Cesarewitch on the late Mr. James White's Ivanhoe. The following year he again rode the winner of another classic, Charlebelle in The Oaks. I fancy no one who saw the finish of that race will ever forget it. Cinna (W. Griggs) was favourite at 2 to 1; Charlebelle, second

favourite, at 7 to 2 ; and the issue was between these two fillies. About a furlong from home it looked as though Cinna (which had been gaining ground) was slightly in front of Charlebelle, and there was a chorus from Northerners and others, such as one rarely hears. Jockeys have told me that they do not hear the yells of the crowd. Sometimes it is just as well they don't !

It seemed, however, as though those who shrieked encouragement to Griggs on Cinna, acted as a stimulant to Whalley, who possibly rode the race of his life. There was no windmill display of arms, legs and whip, but it was obvious he scented danger, and he "sat down and rode" with all the determination and vigour in him. If he had been beaten there are those who would have said he was "rattled," that Charlebelle was unbalanced and so on. Any such allegations would not have been true. Whalley rode a masterly race and won practically on the post. The official verdict was a neck, but many thought it was a short head. So much depends on where one is standing as to how a close finish presents itself.

Whalley came in for, and earned, a good deal of laudation, whilst some blamed William Griggs for not waiting till nearer home to make his challenge. The jockeys on beaten favourites invariably receive a lot of irresponsible criticism, often from men who have never been on a horse in their lives, yet consider themselves competent to tell jockeys of long experience why they didn't win certain events.

Few jockeys have had a more alarming experience than had Whalley in the race for the 1913 Ascot Gold Cup which almost ended in tragedy. In that year the Suffragettes were in a rampant mood. They focused upon racing, not stopping at acts of arson on race-course buildings up and down the country. Earlier in the year 1913 a dastardly plan was carried out at Epsom, for which the culprit, a certain misguided Miss Emily Davison, paid with her life. As the horses in the Derby dashed round Tattenham Corner this suffragette crawled under the rails and hurled herself at the oncoming horses. She brought down the King's horse Anmer, Bert

Jones, the jockey, being seriously injured, the woman dying from her injuries a few hours later.

Donoghue, in telling the story of the attack at Ascot, says :

"When Whalley, on Tracery, was going great guns at the time, came round the bend into the line for home, looking all over a winner, one of the crowd—a man this time—dashed out on to the course with a pistol in his hand, which he pointed at the jockeys, calling out something that sounded like 'Stop, stop, or I'll shoot.' Whalley drove his horse straight on, regardless of the pistol, and all three—Whalley, the horse and the suffragist—came crashing to the ground in a heap. Tracery got up and galloped off, but luckily was soon caught; Whalley was carried back by the ambulance men, and the crowd was with great difficulty restrained from falling on the prostrate man and tearing him limb from limb. The police, however, rescued him, and carried him off to hospital. It was very hard on Whalley, and on the owner of the horse, as Tracery would certainly have won the Gold Cup but for the interference; as it was Prince Palatine carried off the trophy."

Having accomplished Classic honours, Whalley relinquished his licence in 1919 and commenced to train in Berks. Three years previous he had married a daughter of Alfred Smallwood, who was for so long manager to the late Sir Robert Jardine's New England Stud.

Contemporary with Whalley was Cornelius Foy. What can one say of him? In his hey-day he seemed to have the world at his feet. Always an excitable fellow, always a great talker, always full of wit and vivacity, always generous and always a *bon vivant*, "Charlie" Foy (as he was called) could undoubtedly ride, and had any amount of dash and courage, but he tried himself too high. He was a laughter maker, full of good nature, a specious little fellow, and he is still all these things. We meet him constantly acting as a "Turf prophet" as we travel the meetings.

At one time only the best was good enough for him and (at his expense) for those who batted on to him like leeches, or should I say parasites? Foy is a Cum-

brian, born at Whitehaven. To another Cumbrian (Mr. E. J. Percy) and a grandson of a Bishop of Carlisle, he was apprenticed in 1899, and though he never really gained a front-rank place, yet one always felt he might have done so. Often when I was judging he would take his stand by the side of my box, and one wet day at Carlisle came inside. He was difficult to move and I fancy still rather enjoys being in the front of the picture no matter what the ultimate cost.

Donoghue pays him a kindly tribute in his book. I saw him ride some really good races and I never see him now without a pang of regret. He, Dicky Wilkinson and one or two more are constant reminders of the evanescent character of fame, and the insecurity of the jockeys' pedestal. Those who to-day have the smiles of Peers, the envy of some of their fellows, the cheers of the crowd, and a place in the sun, are to-morrow avoided like the plague, called "fools," and are the object of charity of a few who knew them in their prosperity without ever wishing to share in it.

Foy never rode a Classic winner and perhaps his most notable achievements were the winning of the Manchester November Handicap in successive years, viz. on Wagstaff in 1912 and Dalmatian in 1913. In the first-mentioned year he also brought off another notable double, when for the American owner, Mr. L. Winans, he won the Duke of York Stakes (Kempton Park) and the Cambridgeshire on Adam Bede.

Another jockey who was riding with conspicuous success a quarter of a century ago was Charles Trigg. Trigg was a strong horseman, riding at a nice weight, and for some years he was well in the limelight. He possessed in no small degree both courage and dash, which qualities were responsible for his title of "Hell Fire Jack." Trigg was apprenticed to Mr. George Thursby, one of the very few amateurs to have had a ride in the Derby, in which Classic he finished second on Picton to Spearmint in 1906. While he was yet an apprentice, Trigg established a record (still unparalleled by any apprentice), when on October 3rd, 1902, at the Edinburgh meeting he rode five consecutive winners.

His tally for that year was forty-seven winners. Trigg was often the jockey selected when a *coup* was being engineered, and two of the most notable of these with which he was associated were Mintagon's Cesarewitch of 1906 and Mercutio's Lincolnshire Handicap in 1911. There was much romance, indeed tragedy, associated with both these horses and both these races. Mintagon was bought by the late Mr. William I'Anson at the Newmarket December Sales for 500 guineas. As I have related in *Malton Memories and I'Anson Triumphs* it was I'Anson's intention to keep this bad-legged and invariably unsound son of Martagon and Mimi (the winner of the 1891 One Thousand Guineas and the Oaks) for himself, though he was prepared to waive his claim in favour of his patron, Mr. H. F. Clayton.¹

Before he could give Mr. Clayton the chance, however, another stable patron—the late Mr. John Hill, a blind Middlesbrough iron-master—wired I'Anson asking if he might have the horse, which was transferred to him. When Mintagon won the big Newmarket handicap, Mr. Hill said to I'Anson: "*I could see for myself how easily he won.*"

Mintagon's trainer was confident he would win the race and asked his owner to put him on £1000 with his commission. Mr. Hill verbally agreed to do this, but after the race told I'Anson that he was "not standing in to win anything." William I'Anson always made a practice of letting his own wagers go in with the owners' so that there was no question of him having got the cream of the odds, or spoiled the market. It was, therefore, a nasty jar to be informed that he had not a penny on Mintagon, which he had told Mr. Hill he could "back without money till the cows came home."

Mr. John Hill died at Kingston in 1921. Like many others in the Cleveland iron trade, he fell on rather evil days, and it was through this that Trigg's success in the 1911 "Lincoln" was also indirectly associated with Mr. Hill. During a slump in the iron trade, the late Mr. "Jimmy" Byrne, a Saltburn coal-merchant, took over Mr. Hill's horses either in payment for coal or some

¹ Died at Huddersfield, April, 1935, aged 78.

other compromise. Among these horses were Mintagon and Mercutio.

The latter must have cost his new owner a pot of money without ever bringing much grist to the mill, and passed into the hands of the late Charlie Hibbert, the big Nottingham bookmaker.¹ He was sent to Joe Cannon and was entered for the first big handicap of the season in which he carried 8 st. 4 lb. Trigg was engaged to ride, and C. Morton, in his *My Sixty Years of The Turf*, says:

"One night in the Victoria Club, in 1911, Hibbert, when they were calling the card for the Lincoln, showed them what he could do when he was in the mood. Somebody called out: 'One Thousand to Eighty Mercutio.' 'I'll have that,' shouted Charlie, across the room. And he took it five times. Then he laid his own horse until everybody began to wonder what he was driving at. . . . In a devil-may-care mood he laid Mercutio to lose £20,000 and Spanish Prince to lose £10,000.

"When morning came, it began to dawn on him that he had done a foolish thing to lay odds against his own horse, and up and down the country he backed Mercutio to win him thirty or forty thousand pounds. He must have won a fortune over the race."

Trigg, who was third in the jockeys' list in 1910 with 95 winners, and second in 1911 with 111 winners, seemed to drop out of racing after the War. He only rode one Classic winner—Mr. W. Bass' Rosedrop, winner of the Oaks in 1910. Rosedrop, trained by Alec Taylor, was another instance of a stable beating itself.

Her stable companion, Maid of Corinth, started favourite, Rosedrop being at a long price. Among other big winners which Trigg rode were those of the Royal Hunt Cup: 1910, Bachelor's Double, and 1912, Eton Boy, and the Liverpool Autumn Cup, which he won in 1910 on Highness.

Incidentally it fell to Trigg's lot to introduce Pretty Polly to the public. He rode her in her first race, the British Dominion Two-year-old Plate, at Sandown Park,

¹ Died 1915, leaving £103,498.

Saturday, June 27th, 1903. Though Halsey, Lane, Maher, Madden and Bernard Dillon all rode "Polly" in her subsequent races, Trigg was never again on the peerless mare in public.

In my early days quite a number of jockeys were fond of the bottle. Some of them indulged not only at night-time, but had some "jumping powder" almost before every race. Their valets sometimes brought it into the jockeys' room in tea-pots. This is not so to-day. Men like Gordon Richards, Fox, Weston, Nevett and Caldwell are practically teetotallers, and wisely so. Intoxicants, much smoking and wild evenings played the very deuce with a number of good horsemen in the early years of this century. So did severe wasting, which was often the cause of resort to stimulants. I fancy in the light of past history, apprentices are better looked after in these days and not sent off alone to far distant meetings to mix with whom they please and do as they please. As I have said, Richard Wootton set an example in this direction which his son Stanley has in a measure followed with his apprentices.

I have inadvertently mentioned William Nevett, a North-country jockey, who during the Gordon Richards' era has had nothing like the number of mounts or the choice of them which has come the way of the champion jockey. Despite this Nevett's average has been better, and for some years he has been amongst the first three in the list. Just as modest as Richards, equally as capable, Nevett is altogether of a brighter and happier disposition. William Nevett is a native of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, near Manchester, and, unlike Richards, was practically born into racing and ordained for the saddle from the cradle.

With Nevett it was a foregone conclusion, with Richards it was an accident and afterthought. Nevett's father was Mr. Dobson Peacock's first and trusted headman when he set up as a trainer at Middleham with one or two horses. To Middleham and to Peacock went young Willie as soon as he left school. He did well as an apprentice and when out of his time in 1930 (and since) had several tempting offers to transfer his allegiance.

There is a loyalty amongst North-country men which counts for more than personal advancement, and Nevett has elected to remain with his old master and in the North in which there is quite a different Turf atmosphere to that in the South.¹ There have been a number of North-country jockeys and trainers who have gone South for a while. Most of them have been glad to return to their homeland, in which men and sport seem, at any rate, to ring truer.

In the bad old days such was the rivalry between North and South that even when the division was broken down from a racing point of view, all sorts of unsporting schemes were resorted to to prevent Southern horses winning the St. Leger. False starts were engineered, and animals with no pretensions of winning were sent to the post especially to "take care" of the "intruders," and there was, on both sides, open jealousy. This is not quite dead yet, though there is more chaff than real bitterness.

Still, one has often heard Nevett congratulated on winning in the South, not so much because he has won as that he has "taken down those South-country jockeys." This may be said with a laugh, but it is all part of tradition, part of an old sore that the best horses all go to the South now, that Northern stables shelter no Classic winners, and that the North is no longer the school for the most famous jockeys that it used to be. Still, it provides many of them, as I have shown in this chapter.

Willie Nevett is just the same to-day as when he first began to ride as an apprentice. I mean, of course, in personality—a frank, open, cheerful, modest, well-behaved, pleasant, smiling lad, taking the rough with the smooth. He is full of vitality, quick in every movement, as well as in the uptake, full of fun, and altogether likeable. He is popular with his fellows in the jockeys' room, something of an athlete, fond of a greyhound and shooting, an expert motorist, and possessed of sound common-sense in everything.

¹ At Catterick races, May, 1935, Mr. Tom Walls remarked upon this to me. He said he much preferred racing in the north because the sporting spirit is stronger than that of commercialism, and because there is a more marked geniality in the paddocks.

In 1931 he won the Cambridgeshire on Disarmament, the time (1 minute 49 $\frac{3}{5}$ seconds) being a record. He has had his share of falls, the first of which was in 1926, when Alphy struck into another horse's heels and came down. Two years later at Chester, his mount, Music Star, was brought down by Trepidior. Amongst his pleasant memories are the Edinburgh Autumn Meeting of 1931, at which he rode seven winners, whilst at the same fixture, July 1934, he had a mount in all six races one afternoon, won the first five and was third in the last.

In 1933 he would have been still nearer the total of Gordon Richards had he not been out of the saddle for some time owing to an injured hand caused by a gun exploding whilst he was shooting. For some years I have week by week, during the flat-race season, come into contact with Nevett and have never heard an objectionable word uttered by him or an unsavoury suggestion regarding his conduct on the Turf, or in private life.

Joe Caldwell is another whom I have seen equally frequently. Born at Warrington in 1909, Joe is a very business-like, good-natured Lancashire lad who rode Medal in the memorable Cambridgeshire dead-heat of 1927. He began his career with the late Fred Hunt and on the latter's death went to Stanley Wootton, who has turned out so many good lads. Joe has for some years been domiciled in Yorkshire and gets his share of riding for North-country trainers, whilst Vic Smyth gets him when he makes his raids on the North. One of the best-known North-country owners remarked to me only last season: "Caldwell is one of the few jockeys who can give an intelligent description of a race or of the way a horse he has ridden has gone."

One of the younger brigade is Harry Carr, son of Bobby Carr, long head-man for Mr. "Bob" Armstrong. Harry is a nephew of the veteran "Dicky" Crisp. He was born at Penrith, where Armstrong was training in those days, and I have watched his career with interest since the day he had his first mount at Redcar in 1930. He was only thirteen then and had not left school. He rode his first winner at Ayr the following year. At the



W. H. CARR AND HIS FATHER. "BOBBY" CARR

end of 1934 he went to India to ride and did well there.

Mr. R. W. Armstrong, himself a useful jockey in his day, is of the opinion that the boys born during the War are not as easy to train as those of a quarter of a century ago. He is of opinion, too, that there are not so many real horsemen as there used to be in the profession. That is a debatable question raised by the Aga Khan at the 1934 Gimcrack Dinner, but one into which I will not enter here.

CHAPTER IV

LATER DAY JOCKEYS

I MUST now say something regarding one who has made Turf history—to wit, Gordon Richards. Probably his “life” will soon be written, and this will give a full record of his achievements on the Turf. What has always struck me most about him is his quiet, unassuming manner. Those of us who spend much of our racing life in weighing-rooms, have an opportunity of seeing and studying jockeys from quite a different angle to others. It is like being behind the scenes, in the dressing-rooms and wings of a theatre. There actors and actresses, even though dressed and made up, are their natural selves. So it is with jockeys, with some even more so, for they look upon the weighing-room as a sort of refuge and sanctuary in which they are safe from the importuning, questioning, lionising and mobbing of a certain type in the paddock.

I fancy none appreciate the value of the weighing-room in this connection more than Gordon Richards. He has never lost his shy, retiring modesty which has made excessive limelight and hero-worship rather repugnant to him. Unlike many of his contemporaries, there is nothing of the boisterous, excitable hurry and whirl in the weighing-room with him, no shouting for his valet, no last-minute dash to the scale, and bull-in-a-china-shop-like tearing back to the dressing-room.

To look at him, as I have often done, patiently waiting his turn in the queue to be weighed out, one might imagine he was some obscure lad, not quite sure of the ropes, and anxious to keep in the background. In his humility, his good manners and his restraint lays not

only much of his power, but also a natural gentlemanliness and gentleness, which have also stood him in good stead. One admires it all, and if it has not detracted in any way from his fame, Gordon certainly lacks the mobile face of Steve Donoghue, the charm of Michael Beary ("Angel Face," as he has been called to his own amusement), the humour of Joe Taylor and W. Nevett, the vivacity of Joe Caldwell, the quaint piquancy of Dines, the assurance and domination of Weston, the supreme confidence of H. Wragg, the seeming wearied detachment of Rufus Beasley, the business-like haste of Smirke, the grave matter-of-factness of Childs, the alertness and happiness of Jelliss Junior, the brightness of eye and smile of Willie Christie, the fun of Davy McGuigan and the buoyancy of Harry Gunn.

Gordon Richards' face, when in repose, would suggest sadness rather than any of those qualities and attributes mentioned as the possessions of some of his contemporaries. I have never seen him "rattled," and I have rarely seen signs of that strain and weariness which are both so often marked in jockeys who have been wasting hard, who are worn out with travelling and with late nights, depressed by a run of bad luck, or the adverse criticisms of owners or trainers, which sometimes enter like iron into a jockey's soul when he knows such censure is not justified.

Richards and I have had many chats in weighing-rooms and I, during the course of them, have hardly ever mentioned racing. I fancy it is rather a relief to him to find someone who is not so absolutely single-minded as to have no thought or interest beyond the constant striving to find winners.

Apropos of his dislike of lionising, and the vulgar curiosity, which almost amounts to mobbing, I had a very clear example of his feeling when he came to Thirsk on Friday, November 3rd, 1933. He told me on that beastly day—one of the few wet afternoons Thirsk has had since the whole course and appointments were reconstructed after the War—that he felt "like a hunted fox." It was Captain Stanley ("Jack") Wilson who had persuaded Gordon to ride at Thirsk in his attempt to

equal Fred Archer's record of 246 winning mounts in one season. The same evening I recorded in my diary :

"A record crowd at Thirsk despite the filthy day. The Press had roused public interest in Gordon Richards to boiling-point and Captain 'Jack' Wilson (who is one of the directors of Thirsk) not only saw that it would be a great draw to the meeting, but was also anxious that Richards should achieve his ambition of reaching Archer's record by riding the necessary winner on the Yorkshire course. The Captain had had bills printed and circulated in Leeds, York, and elsewhere announcing that the champion jockey would ride at Thirsk, which reminds one of the only occasion on which Archer rode at the same meeting. Then a bell-man was sent round to announce that 'the great Mr. Archer will positively appear at Thirsk this afternoon.'

"No doubt this would prove a great 'draw' as did Richards, whose present effort to equal Archer's remarkable figures has so captured the public imagination. Well, he didn't achieve his objective at Thirsk and when he does it cannot be compared with Archer's wonderful total for one season (1885) in view of the difference in the weight of the two men and the much greater number of mounts Richards has had this year in comparison with Archer's total rides in his record year. Gordon motored down from York to Thirsk and in his wake—he had a big advance-guard of them, too—came a crowd of Press photographers, cinematograph men and reporters.

"The camera men would have filled the unsaddling paddock, so could not be allowed there. Eventually they decided that they could snap the triumphal procession from the top of the weighing-room and I was kept busy writing out permits for them to take up their position there. Then Press-men came singly, and in groups, to see how they could 'get at' Richards for an interview after he had ridden a winner. There were literally dozens of them, the weighing-room was besieged and it was all we could do to keep the attacking army out of the jockey's dressing-room. I went in and had a word with the little man, who was obviously uncomfortable at all the fuss. At first he declined to be interviewed,

but I told him that he would be dogged and shadowed and cornered until he did say *something* to the Press if he succeeded in his campaign and that he'd better see one or two of the Press-men in the weighing-room after he had ridden a winner, and let them give the others what he said. To this course he agreed with some reluctance.

"As it turned out, he had a blank day, so there was no interviewing and no cheering. It was an afternoon which I know 'got on his nerves.' A man who is already highly strung, doesn't want all this distraction, mental upheaval and electricity in the air, when he has to ride. He cannot really do his best and he was very glad when it was over, though he will have to 'go through it again' to-morrow at Hurst Park. He'll be hunted there just as he was to-day at Thirsk. A thousand extra race-cards were printed to-day and were soon gone. Some men who love being lionised would have thoroughly enjoyed the whole thing—Gordon didn't! I could see that even the invitation he got to go into the private luncheon-rooms in the club stand was not appreciated. He was like a badger being baited and drawn when he wanted to creep away into a corner and be left alone, yet people couldn't see it, and for their own selfish gratification wouldn't leave him alone."

The equalling of Archer's record was not long delayed as on the very next day (November 4th) he rode El Senor a winner in the Mitre Selling Handicap at Hurst Park. Then the storm broke out. Photographs of Richards occupied a prominent position in every newspaper, and columns of "specials" were turned out by enthusiastic journalists. He was seen by millions of patrons of picture palaces and was fêted wherever he went. Mr. E. Thornton Smith, the owner of El Senor (upon which he brought his total to Archer's record), presented him with the great jockey's whip and spurs which he just bought in a London auction room. Mr. Jack Turner (whose Ennis Bridge provided Gordon with his 240th winner) gave him another interesting Archer souvenir in the shape of a china dish, on which was a picture of the immortal "Tinman" together with details of his career. Perhaps the most appreciated of all the gifts he received

at this time was the address of welcome and congratulations inscribed on vellum, presented to him by the District Council and sportsmen of his birth-place, Oakengates. The presentation was made by Steve Donoghue at a civic reception at which 300 guests were present, amongst whom were several of the leading jockeys, Jimmy Wilde the boxer, and Richards' old master, Martin Hartigan. Prior to this, Gordon had broken Archer's record at Liverpool on Golden King, and in addition to the address a replica in silver of himself on that horse was also presented to him. In acknowledging the gifts, Richards said that it was the "happiest moment of his life."

Gordon Richards is one of the many instances of a boy without a drop of "horsey" blood in his veins making a great jockey. He has a level head on his shoulders, has invested his money wisely, and when he leaves the Turf he will be a rich man. Born at Oakengates, Shropshire, May 6th, 1904, he has still many years riding in front of him if he cares to continue his profession. Apprenticed to M. Hartigan at the time Donoghue was first jockey to the stable, Richards had the benefit of many hints from Steve. He had his first mount in public in 1920 and he rode his first winner on March 31st, 1921, this being the ill-fated James White's Gay Lord in the Apprentices' Plate at Leicester.

A good deal was made of Richards breaking the 1885 record of Fred Archer of riding 241 winners out of 577 mounts. In 1933 Richards' total was 259, but without belittling that achievement it must be remembered that the champion jockey of to-day had 899 mounts in 1933 and that for years prior to his tragic death in 1886 Archer could not go to scale under 8 st. 7 lb. Despite all his ability and all his success one cannot describe Gordon Richards as "a pretty jockey." Some of his finishes have been marked by a gyratious and a pantomimic display which, in a rider without his reputation, might be condemned. It is noticeable, however, that he keeps his legs still and that he does not get his horses unbalanced or cause them to change a leg. He is one of those jockeys, too, who encourage their horses with the voice,

which, with some animals, has a marked effect. Having touched upon statistics I here append Richards' triumphs so far as they are denoted by figures :

Year	Mounts	Wins
1921	47	5
1922	72	5
1923	324	49
1924	517	61
1925	730	118
1926	53	5
1927	771	164
1928	863	148
1929	772	135
1930	832	128
1931	899	145
1932	945	190
1933	899	259
1934	964	212

The 1926 figures are explained by the fact that Richards caught a chill at Lincoln which resulted in pneumonia. He was advised that if he did not take great care and give up race riding for a time his lungs might be permanently affected. In addition he had an operation for appendicitis in the winter of that year. He also came near to losing his life on the Friday of the Leger week at Doncaster, 1933, when an airplane, in which with Fred Lane, Mrs. Hartigan and Fred Darling he was flying to London, crashed, the pilot (Captain Pennington) being killed. He married, in 1928, Miss Margaret Winckle of Swindon, and has some little sons and a happy home. He has two younger brothers who are also jockeys, without having attained anything of the success of Gordon.

From the same county as Gordon Richards comes Fred Fox, who is sixteen years Gordon's senior, having been born February 18th, 1887, at Ryton, Dorrington. There is something very likeable about him, and though I have put on record that I have never discussed racing in any of its aspects with Gordon Richards, when Fox and I have had a meal together or have travelled in each other's company we have invariably talked about horses

and hunting. It has, however, been about "blood 'uns" with peculiar characteristics, or something which sets them apart from other horses, rather than the chances of runners on the morrow, or in big races in the future. I am one of those men who, though intimately connected with racing, never have a bet. Apart altogether from this, however, I have always felt it a matter of good taste and decency never to attempt to "tout" jockeys, and the result has been that we have had many far more interesting conversations than if I had been trying to pick their brains as so many do when they have them, so to speak, in a corner.

Fox is a good talker, with sound views and theories of his own, and the power to give expression to them. He was apprenticed to F. Pratt at Lambourn in 1906, his first winning mount being at Warwick on April 8th, 1907, when he rode Mr. W. Nichols's Purdysburn in an Apprentices' Plate. The following year saw him ride his first important winner when he was successful on Yentoi in the Cesarewitch. When out of his time, Fox went abroad and rode for several seasons in Austria and Germany with considerable success. He can talk well about Continental affairs and is much more of a thinker than most jockeys. This applies to national and international affairs as well as to when riding races. On returning to this country he got a lot of riding and, in 1930, was champion jockey, his score being 129 and that of Gordon Richards 128. At the end of that season he said: "I'm pleased to have achieved what is supposed to be an ambition of every jockey—to top the list—but I have never regarded it as the supreme honour, as good horses make good jockeys, and no one can work miracles on moderate animals, however competent he may be. I have no difficulty in keeping my weight down, whereas lots of great jockeys have got so heavy they have not been able to take lots of mounts which would have added to their total of winners."

Fox keeps himself fit during the winter by hunting, and well he goes over the Old Berkshire country. In 1931 he won the Derby on Mr. J. A. Dewar's Cameronian, and the following year notched his first St. Leger victory on

the Aga Khan's Firdaussi, the 1933 Cesarewitch winner, Seminole, being also steered by him. Most of the other big races have been won by him and he was riding as well in 1934 as ever he did, thanks to an even temperament, a regular life, and a sane enjoyment of it. He loves his days with hounds, I fancy more than racing, though his happy nature enables him to find the best in most things, albeit in most people I have always been struck by his generosity when discussing the small fry on the Turf, and never remember hearing him say an unkind or belittling word regarding any of them.

He is in no way akin to the North-country jockey, Enos Fox, a good horseman, who has never had the same chances as Fred. Enos is another of those retiring jockeys with a keen sense of humour and a perpetual kindly smile in his eyes. He was born at Weeton, near Leeds, in 1897, like T. Weston, was apprenticed to Ned McCormack, who was then trainer for George Drake at Middleham. From there he joined the army, and at the end of hostilities, went to India for a couple of years. When he returned he rode for Captain Charles Elsey's Malton stable. In 1928 he had a narrow escape at Catterick when riding Peardrop, which seemed to suddenly go mad and, without rhyme or reason, went straight on at the turn and fell over a hurdle. A fall when going racing pace is a very different matter to a cropper in the hunting field.

Fortunately Enos was little worse, though those of us who witnessed the accident were prepared for anything. For some years Fox has been associated with Tom Green's stable at Pontefract. He married in 1931 Miss Gertrude Rolles of Malton, their wedding-cake being decorated with a model of Ken Hill (owned by Sir Lycett Green) on which Fox had won four races that season.

Incidental mention has been made of Thomas Weston, whom I have known since the first day he set foot on a race-course. In those days and during his apprenticeship, he was nurtured in a school surrounded by a certain amount of secrecy and mystery. The presiding genius was the late George Drake—alias G. W. Smith (previously referred to), a Leeds bookmaker who had his hand

in many pies. He had greyhounds, running men, fighting men, theatres and a training stable at Middleham amongst his varied interests. The latter must have cost him a fortune without bringing much return.

Another Leeds penciller, the late Joe Pickersgill, who was even in a bigger way of business than Drake, soon tired of owning race-horses and decided it paid better to lay them. He died in 1920 worth £746,459. As to Drake, who died at Pannel near Harrogate, he departed in 1925 intestate, his estate being proved at £131,136. A tall, handsome man, George Drake never cultivated the refinements and culture which Pickersgill was careful to acquire. To Drake's Warwick House establishment went Thomas Weston in 1917. He was born at West-town, Dewsbury, in 1903, and is the son of a teamster on the London and North Western railway.

At the age of thirteen Weston left the local Catholic school to become a chain-boy on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. Amongst the theatres owned by George Drake was the Empire at Dewsbury, and when Weston was fourteen years old and 4 st. 3 lb. in weight, he approached Drake in response to an advertisement for an apprentice. The result was that he went to Ned McCormack. An aunt who had brought him up made it a condition that Tommy was to be allowed to attend Mass on Sundays. There was no difficulty about this as McCormack is a Catholic, and the Scropes of Danby have always welcomed the Catholic boys at Middleham training stables to their private chapel. By the irony of fate, Weston's aunt was killed the only time she went to see him ride at Pontefract.

After being eight months in stables, Weston had his first ride in public at Stockton on Black Crag. I remember the occasion well, for McCormack brought the little lad up to me and introduced him as a budding Archer. Late in the afternoon I spoke to him again and he caught sight of George Drake, which seemed to make him curl up like a hedge-hog. He daren't speak, or answer any questions and didn't want to be seen talking to anyone. On another occasion, not long after, when he had ridden a winner or two, I wanted to write something about him,

and approached him in the paddock. Again it fell out that he saw Drake in the distance and seemed to be mesmerised by those hard, cold, keen eyes. "See me later," said Weston, "there's the boss over there." I didn't bother to see him later and merely mention these facts to give an idea of the early days of Weston in an atmosphere of mystery, suspicion, restraint and even fear.

It is perhaps wise to teach young jockeys at the outset of their career not to associate with Tom, Dick and Harry, or answer the questions of any persons who try to ingratiate themselves. Weston certainly had all this well drilled into him in his boyhood and it would perhaps not be a bad thing if some jockeys continued to be as careful of their intimates when they are no longer apprentices under the restraint of a strict master. Weston's first winning ride was on one of Drake's horses, Sally Crag, 6 years, 5 st. 12 lb., on August 2nd, 1918, at Newmarket. There were fifteen runners in this Apprentice Handicap and amongst them was Mustapha, then twelve years old. He had to give a stone to Sally Crag, and this was his last appearance on a race-course. Mustapha had been three times second for the Cambridgeshire, twice being beaten by Christmas Daisy and once by Long Set to which he was giving 22 lb. George Drake had a number of the "Craggs" which were by Catty Crag.

In 1919 Weston won the Kempton Park Jubilee Handicap on Arion and this helped to bring him into the lime-light. In 1922 he became connected with the Stanley House stable, then under Mr. George Lambton's control. By then he was just over 7 st., and in 1923 he became Lord Derby's first jockey, winning the St. Leger for his lordship that year on Tranquil. The following year (1924) he won the Derby on Sansovino, carrying 2 st. dead weight, and in 1926 he steered Colorado to victory in the Two Thousand Guineas. In 1927 and again in 1928 he won the Oaks on Beam and Toboggan respectively, and in 1930 he rode Fair Isle to win the One Thousand. In 1928 he rode Fairway when that temperamental horse won the St. Leger, and another Derby and

St. Leger came his way in 1933, in which year he won both races on the little more than a pony, Hyperion. Thus Weston's name will go down in Turf history as a strong, determined, and successful jockey.

He ceased to ride as first jockey to Lord Derby in 1934, the ending of the agreement being quite an amicable one, concluding with a triumph at Liverpool. Thomas Weston is not only a strong horseman, but he is also strong in personality. Success has given him abundant confidence in himself. He was "champion jockey" in 1926 and second in the list the following year. Recently I read a sketch of his career by a Yorkshireman in which a pleasing side of his character was revealed. Listen :

"He must have made a packet of money—perhaps a good deal more than most men who achieve fame in any walk of life can hope to make in such a short period, for it is only seventeen years since he was pottering about the engine sheds at Dewsbury. Without affectation he comes back to his home town, is in close and affectionate touch with his folk who remain there, and can on the slightest provocation, lapse into West Riding dialect."

"Johnny" Dines is one of the best men to hounds in Ireland. Harry Beasley is another. Any man who rides straight over those Irish banks I consider a bold fellow, a good horseman, and he at once has my respect. Dines and I have often discussed riding to hounds in Ireland and laughed over the places which have put the fear of death into many Englishmen (on English horses) besides myself. In his soft voice, Dines always gives the same advice : "Get astride of a horse which knows its business and then have absolute confidence in it." That is his tip for riding over the Fairyhouse or any other country in Ireland, and he ought to know.

A whimsical little fellow is Dines, with a good deal of natural courtesy, in keeping with his quiet voice and manner. His name is really "James," but he is never known as anything but "Johnnie." He was born in Ireland and was apprenticed to P. Lowe, having his first ride at Wolverhampton in 1907. He has a remarkable record in connection with the Liverpool Cup, having won no less than seven up to 1935. He is one of the

smallest jockeys riding, one of the strongest, and one of the most capable. Unlike many of his contemporaries he is a judge of a horse, is really interested in bloodstock breeding and talks interestingly regarding the latter lottery.

Pat ("Rufus") and Harry Beasley are two more Irishmen, who, as I have mentioned, are bold horsemen across country. Both, of course, ride over hurdles as well as on the flat. Pat, who was educated at Ampleforth Catholic College in Yorkshire (whereat, he has told me, he was usually bottom of his form), has a manner peculiar to himself. He speaks in a quiet, almost monotonous monotone, which alters but little even on those rare occasions when he is roused out of what might (though inaccurately) be imagined a sort of bored, wearied lethargy. "Rufus" Beasley has never lost a soupçon of Irish brogue, but there is nothing of the excitable, irresponsible, irrepressible "Wild Irishman" about him. Indeed, he is the antithesis of all this. Nevertheless Pat Beasley is quite able to hold his own in the saddle and in an argument, and will allow no one to squash him, no matter how quiet, retiring, and reticent he may seem. Indeed, he is a somewhat complex character and wants understanding. He looks at one curiously with those Irish eyes, and there is a mixture of humour, astuteness, and apparent blankness in the look. He strikes one as a dreamer, it is not affectation, but he is often not dreaming quite as much as he would appear to be.

I cannot quote a better instance of his dogged imperturbability, and his determination not to be beaten, than an incident, or rather a series of incidents, at Liverpool when he had his first ride in England. Tredina put him on the ground five times at the post, he never lost his temper, his patience, his sang-froid, he simply mounted again after each mishap, and after the fifth occasion, jumped well off in front.

Though not a great conversationalist, or bubbling over with vivacity, Harry Beasley is a little more animate than his younger brother. Both wisely chose to become professionals rather than to travel round the meetings as

pseudo-amateurs. They both went to Stockbridge and Sam Darling once said: "If I were having a selling-plate gamble, Harry Beasley would be the jockey for me. I do not think he would raise even an eyelid if I told him I had £10,000 on, and it would certainly not cause him to ride other than in the usual steady fashion."

There is a wealth of meaning behind this, and it tells us much of the temperament of the jockey. All the brothers are bred to the game. Nobody in the jockey world more so, and the strange thing would have been if Willie, Harry and Pat Beasley had not naturally taken to the saddle, to race riding and to hunting. The father, "Old Harry," was one of four famous amateur race-riding brothers. He was born in 1857 and had his first winning mount in 1877—before most of us were born. His first mount at Liverpool was in 1879 when he won the Liverpool Hurdle Race on Turco, which horse he also rode (unplaced) in the Grand National. In 1880 he rode Woodbrook in the National, won by his brother Tom, on Empress. In 1881 Tom won the great Aintree race for the second time on Woodbrook; Harry on that occasion riding Fair Wind. In all Harry had thirteen mounts in the Grand National, which eventually fell to him in 1891 when he rode Come Away. He was second on three other occasions and third once. Tom Beasley rode in twelve Nationals, won three and was twice second. Harry Beasley senior rode five winners of the Grand Sefton, won the Grand Hurdle Race, Paris, with Seaman, 1881; the Grand Paris Steeplechase, 1883, on Too Good; and again in 1890 on Royal Meath.

Over Punchestown he has won many races, beating his son Willie in 1922, winning again in 1923 and having a mount on his own horse Antiope on the flat at the Curragh, September 19th, 1934, when in his eighty-second year. Old John Osborne rode to work at this age, but I do not know another instance of anyone riding in a race when over eighty. The Beasleys have long been located at Athy in Kildare.

"Young" Harry was for some years first jockey for Persse's stable. He won the Cesarewitch in 1925 on

Forseti, and the Two Thousand in 1929 on Major D. McCalmont's Mr. Jinks. I once heard someone in the paddock remark "that jockey looks bored to tears with everything." Probably others have thought the same when they have seen Harry and Pat, heads forward, faces immobile, and inscrutable, sitting or standing outside the weighing-room. Things are not always what they seem, and it is not always wise to take men at face value. This is certainly so in the case of the two Beasley brothers, who know how to mind their own business.

Continuing to speak of Irishmen, Michael Beary was also of Irish hunting parents. I fancy that the late Lord Wavertree saw him going so well to hounds that he put the idea of his becoming a jockey into his head. Michael went first to Dr. McCabe (who trained Orby, the Derby winner of 1907) at the Curragh, and was then apprenticed to H. S. Persse at Stockbridge in 1912, having his first ride on Hainesby at the Bath Spring meeting, 1913. Donoghue was instrumental in getting him this mount, on which he finished third. He was asked to ride the horse again the following day, but Persse's head man declined to allow him to return to Bath.

Head lads have a good deal of authority and are often virtually trainers. They have a considerable amount of irritation to put up with in the management of a lot of little boys, and find discipline absolutely necessary. Occasionally, however, I have known them despotic and hard task-masters, possessing little sympathy with the buoyancy of youth. Michael Beary, boy though he was, decided to take "French leave," and went to Bath to ride his first winner. He soon after returned to Ireland to finish his apprenticeship with Parkinson, and in his final year was the most successful apprentice in his homeland. In 1922 he came back to England and finished the season third in the jockeys' list to Donoghue and Elliot. The following year he won the Cambridgeshire on Verdict. There was a tremendous finish between Verdict and the French horse Epinard, and I shall always think Beary rode the race of his life on that occasion. His victory on Solario in the 1924 Ascot Derby, when he defeated the odds on Derby winner, Manna, was a first-class Turf

sensation. Beary's friend, Donoghue, was on Manna. In 1925 came a sensation of another sort, when Michael's license was suspended. He had made a number of bets for an Irishman sportsman who was unable to meet his liabilities to bookmakers. Beary, though he had only acted as agent, was "posted" in Ireland, and thus automatically became a disqualified person. In July, 1925, "Field Steward," who knew Beary well, wrote :¹

"Beary has his head screwed on all right in one sense, though he has never acquired the ability to keep the money which he has undoubtedly been able to make during his rapid rise to the top of the tree. Some of his speculations have not been happy. Beary is unfathomable to the majority of his acquaintances and he does not cultivate the bosom friend. Gifted with a particularly charming smile and 'angelic' countenance, he can be so delightful when the mood takes him. But he will, as often, curl himself up within himself and become 'unapproachable.' He lived luxuriously—when circumstances permitted—in a suite at the Carlton Hotel. Beary's position is now that he must first settle up in Ireland before he can even think of his future active career in the racing world."

At the end of August he appeared at York, where he satisfied the Stewards of the Jockey Club that the wagers he had made were not on his own behalf, and that the gentleman responsible had settled all claims against him. His licence was restored forthwith, and I think everyone was pleased. Indeed, there is no greater evidence of the kindly feeling and brotherhood on the Turf than the sincere greetings and welcome back accorded to those who are reinstated after having come under the ban of the ruling authority.

Beary won the 1932 Irish Derby on the Aga Khan's Dastur, and in the same season had the choice of the Aga Khan's four runners in the Doncaster St. Leger. He elected to ride Dastur, which finished second to Firdaussi, also carrying the Aga Khan's colours. The 1932 Cesarewitch also fell to Beary on Nitsichin. He has ridden over hurdles and I recall that at Wolverhampton

¹ In the defunct *Pink 'Un*.

in 1921 he rode three winners in succession under National Hunt rules.

John Beary, a brother of Michael's, began training in 1928 and in 1931 the Aga Khan transferred most of his horses to John's care.

There are several instances of families of brothers riding at the same time—the Taylors, Collings, Baldings, Woottons, Wraggs, Doyles, and Richards amongst them. The Yorkshire quartette of Balding brothers are not to be confounded with the polo-playing brothers of Melton Mowbray. Robert, William, Arthur and Cyril Balding were all born at Mexborough. Robert, who was the eldest of the four jockey brothers, was killed in a motor accident on the Alfreton-Chesterfield road in May, 1928. He was one of a family of sixteen and at the age of twelve was apprenticed to quaint old James Milnthorpe of Doncaster, but his indentures were later transferred to Bert Lines. These boys come of a "horsey" family for a great-uncle rode the winner of the Lincoln in the middle of last century, and their great-grandfather was concerned with coaching in its palmy days, having horsed some of the mail coaches from Boston to Peterborough.

William Balding was apprenticed in 1912 to J. A. Lake, then training at Doncaster, and after two years went to Lines. He got too heavy for the flat, so for a time rode under National Hunt rules. He relinquished his licence in 1932, in which year he commenced to train for Mr. H. H. Asquith at Dodwith Hall, near Barnsley. Arthur, who was the most successful of the brothers, was born in 1903 and in due course went to Lines. At one time it looked as though he was to go to the top for he became first jockey to the late P. P. Gilpin's stable. That trainer said of him when he wrote his memoirs :

"This generation has seen many great riders, quite worthy successors of the past, and, though I witnessed many great races in the last quarter of a century, I need not cast my mind back to recall one of the finest finishes it has been my good fortune to see. That was when Cornsack won the City and Suburban, and the official verdict was a short head defeat of Square Measure, with the third only a neck away. Paragon also contributed to

the close finishes that I have seen when he won the Duke of York Stakes and the Jubilee Handicap by a head in each instance. Arthur Balding rode Cornsack and Paragon in each of these races."

This was the testimony of one who knew what he was talking about, and he was not alone in placing Arthur Balding in the front rank. He rode the 1920 Chester Cup winner (Our Stephen—owned by the late Mr. Frank Curzon and named after Donoghue), and the 1927 Thousand Guineas winner (Cresta Run), but somehow he did not continue to hold the position he had taken and has almost become forgotten, though he occasionally has a ride for his brother with whom he now is. He was with Roy Pope for a couple of seasons. He went, in 1924, to Captain Charles Elsey, when that trainer was at Ayr; then he was with Melton Vasey at Doncaster. He had a nasty accident at Stockton in 1927 when his mount, Little Flo, fell and brought down Blue Wit, the mount of Joe Thwaites. Probably had he continued to have good horses to ride he would have achieved what seemed a brilliant career in store for him.

The three Taylor brothers, Joe, David and Fred, were for a season or two a constant enigma to Clerks of Scales. The two older brothers had a certain resemblance, but to ensure their returns to Messrs. Weatherby being correct, scales officials always asked which Taylor it was when they came to weigh out. Like the Baldings they are Yorkshiremen and of the trio only Joe continues to ride. He and Davy were both apprenticed to J. Dawson and it was at Redcar Joe rode his first winner on Kingdom in 1912. When he left Dawson he went to Melton Vasey and rode a lot of winners for him, several times doing what is called "the hat trick." On leaving Doncaster he went to Middleham and was first jockey to Peacock until 1931.

Next season he went to Captain Elsey at Malton, and for a season or two has been a free lance. Increasing weight has reduced the number of his mounts. He was 8st. 6lb. in 1931, when he was a victim to pneumonia, and I remember when he had just recovered and got into the scale at Catterick he found he was down to 7 stones.

Joe is a typical Yorkshireman—strong, burly, big-boned, calling a spade a spade, genial, full of fun, always smiling, taking the rough with the smooth, dependable and unpretentious. I have known him since he was a little boy and have seen him under all sorts of conditions, including those when he has been laid on a seat in the jockeys' dressing-room in sweaters and a top coat with perspiration streaming out of him, after having run round race-courses to get off a pound or two. Sometimes he rather over-egged the pudding with wasting and I remember him, strong as he is, fainting on the Scotch circuit after getting off two or three pounds in a very short time to ride something or other. He had remarked to me only a short time before when coming in weak and tired after his wasting walk—"Who wouldn't be a jockey?"

Nevertheless, I fancy Joe Taylor thoroughly loves his profession, despite all the privations it has entailed. He enjoys the *camaraderie* of the jockeys' room and the paddock, for he is a sociable soul, but if he wrote his memories I fancy he would say that most of all he has loved the thrills of the tight finishes in which he has ridden and shone. He has always been a strong finisher, even when he has been wasting, and I have seen some bits of really admirable jockeyship on his part on such occasions. Winning or beaten he always seemed good-natured, one of the few exceptions being when Simba fell with him at Pontefract in April, 1926, and broke her neck. He got a nasty shaking and *did* look woebegone then.

Davy Taylor, Joe's brother, started training at Doncaster when he gave up riding. He also was apprenticed to J. Dawson and had a few rides under National Hunt rules prior to 1926, when he took out a trainer's licence. He had wonderful old Darboy under his charge in 1930 and won five races off the reel with him. I never saw him again after the Grand Success affair at Lanark in 1930 till the Catterick Spring meeting of 1934. He had "come racing" for the first time. I asked him if he was going to get a few horses together, but he replied that he would not be a trainer again for a quarter of a million, and insisted that he knew absolutely nothing

about the "doping" of Grand Success. The whole thing, he said, was as big a mystery to him that day as when he first learned that the horse had been "doped." One wonders if some day the mystery will be solved. At the end of 1934 he went to help Mr. John Harper at Middleham and looks all the happier for being in harness again.

Fred Taylor, the youngest of the three brothers, is a very business-like young man. He was apprenticed to Melton Vasey and lost his allowance in 1924, his first winner afterwards being Little Red Rat at Ripon in that year. In 1926 he was attached to Bertram Bullock's stable, then at Pattingham, and in 1930 he became a trainer at Knottingley, near Pontefract, where the late Major W. F. Lee (later known as a handicapper) trained the still remembered Royal Flush for some of his races. Fred moved to Doncaster to train and in January, 1932, transferred his string to Beverley. But in 1934 he temporarily gave up training and became associated with Hammett's Beverley stable.

Another collection of jockey brothers are the Wraggs, who are also Yorkshiremen, having been born at Sheffield. And now I am going to record a strange fact. Although I have seen the brothers Wragg and been in more or less close contact with them almost weekly during the racing season since they commenced to ride in public, I have hardly exchanged a score of words with them season by season. You know how you are drawn towards some people whilst with others you feel to have nothing in common whatever. Of their artistry in their profession there is no question. Harry (whose stable name of "Sheff" has stuck to him) was born in June, 1902, and was apprenticed to R. W. Colling, who hadn't many horses at that time.

That very far-seeing and clever racing man "Cannie" Watts (if only he wrote his memories!), who was an intimate friend of Colling's, thought that Wragg's light was being hidden under a bushel and suggested that he be loaned to Captain (now Sir John) Renwick, whose Whitewall stable at Malton was then full. "Cannie's" advice was taken on this matter (as by others on many

occasions). It may be that this gave Wragg his chance, without which he might have gone through his apprenticeship without having an opportunity of showing the stuff he was made of. I never met a shrewder man than "Cannie" Watts (unless it be Johnnie Marr of Leeds), no matter whether it was working a commission, picking out a winner, backing a horse in running, or indeed anything and everything connected with every phase of racing. I remember that on one of the few isolated occasions one race judge officiated he was faced with a field of about thirty in a sprint at Catterick and realised that the task in front of him might be more than he could tackle satisfactorily. He therefore asked the stewards' permission to have someone in the box with him. The request was granted and he chose "Cannie" to accompany him, knowing that the experienced York professional was familiar with every colour, and had been so long at the game that he kept his head at the most thrilling moment. Well then, it was "Cannie" Watts (who seems to have transferred his Turf activities to the south) who had something to do with the moulding of Harry Wragg's future.

Wragg rode fourteen winners in his first season and his services became much sought after. In 1921 he wore the Royal Turf livery for the first time when he won the Ormonde Plate at Newbury on Will Somers. In 1924 he rode regularly for His Majesty, and that year rode three successive winners at Ayr. A few days later (Easter Monday), he won at Newcastle on Executioner, Whitsun, Artemis and Advantage. He was first jockey to the late Mr. S. B. Joel in 1926, and then came his real opportunity. The previous year he had won in the pink and green stripes of the late Mr. Joel, the Eclipse Stakes on Polyphontes, the Goodwood Cup on Glommen and the Ebor Handicap at York on Pons Asinorum. In January of 1927 he married Miss Marjorie Hobson, the daughter of a Leeds hotel proprietor, and that summer he rode six consecutive winners on the Scotch circuit. Later he became first jockey to O. Bell's stable, and in 1928 won his first Derby on Felstead for Sir H. Cunliffe-Owen. Two years later came his second Derby

triumph on the Aga Khan's Blenheim. At the end of that season he rode in India and in 1931 finished second to Gordon Richards in the winning jockey's list with 110 successes. His victories included the St. Leger on Lord Rosebery's Sandwich. By riding King Salmon a winner in the 1934 Eclipse Stakes at Sandown Park, Wragg thereby equalled the record of Danny Maher, who won on Cheers, Darley Dale, Bayardo and Neil Gow. Wragg's previous successes were on Polyphontes (1925), (this horse won the previous year when ridden by M'Lachlan), Rustom Pasha (1930), and Miracle (1932). Incidentally in winning the 1934 "Eclipse" King Salmon did the best time for the race (2 minutes 6 ⁴/₅ seconds), the previous record having been established by Diamond Jubilee, who, when winning the race for the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII), took one-fifth of a second longer. The value of the 1934 Eclipse was £7,061 and as King Salmon had previously won the Coronation Cup of £1,605 these successes made him a rare bargain horse for his owner Sir Richard Brooke.

Wragg's record is sufficient to make anyone pleased with themselves. It is very human! The feature of his riding is his patience, his ability to wait, to judge the psychological moment to "come," and to have so nursed his horses that he has sufficient left for the late runs which have won him many races. This is undoubtedly art and not many jockeys possess it. We have all seen many races thrown away by waiting tactics and attempts at spectacular finishes. "Waiting in front" is safer for those who have not the almost uncanny, intuitive knowledge of Harry Wragg. He has had his share of the rough and tumble of race riding.

On October 20th, 1932, when riding Donatia to the post at Gosforth Park, he was thrown owing to his mount pecking, and sustained a fractured leg. This put an end to his riding for the season at a time when he was second to Gordon Richards with 42 wins to his credit. At Newmarket on July 12th, 1933, he had another accident when Talos dashed into the tapes and then fell back on him. The shin bone in his other leg was cracked. A pleasing trait in his character is the way he

looked after his two younger brothers when they commenced to ride. In the jockeys' room, on the way to and at the post, indeed at all times, he has "fathered them," and when they won their first races was more pleased than if he had won himself. Not infrequently the trio of brothers have ridden in races against each other. One of these instances was at Nottingham in March, 1934, when the Rufford Handicap Plate was won by Tetraset (A. Wragg), Biretta (S. Wragg) was second and Hillsbrow (H. Wragg) third. In June, 1933, Harry Wragg won the Blagdon Selling Plate on Cornwood, Arthur was second on Body Line and Sam third on Myton. On the latter occasion, however, there were only four runners. Harry Wragg now lives at Bedford Lodge, once the Newmarket house of that remarkable and foolish young man Mr. George Abington Baird.

Sam Wragg was also apprenticed to R. W. Colling and had his first classic winner in 1933, when he won the Oaks on Chatelaine. He won the 1930 Liverpool Autumn Cup on Hot Bun, and in 1931 was successful in the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood on Poor Lad. Almost at the outset of his career he had a nasty accident at Alexandra Park in August, 1928, when his mount slipped up and rolled over him. The following year at Leicester, when riding Typhoon, there was a collision at the first bend and Hansruedy (ridden by Rook) struck into the heels of a horse in front and fell. Down came Typhoon and Philema (T. Lowrey). Sam came off the best of the trio, the other two lads being more or less seriously hurt.

In May of 1934 he was again incapacitated following injuries received in a motor crash. On that occasion he was travelling from Haydock Park to Leeds in a car driven by Mr. John Marr of Leeds along with another passenger, Mr. John Harrington of Wakefield. When at Lindley Moor, Huddersfield, the car skidded and crashed into a wall. The trio were taken to the Royal Infirmary at Huddersfield where they, with cuts and head injuries, were detained, Wragg's engagements for the following day having to be cancelled.

Arthur Wragg, the younger of the three brothers, was apprenticed to Stanley Wootton and rode his fortieth winner in the Meadow Welter at Windsor on August 17th, 1929, his mount being Coquilla. He will always remember Windsor, for it was here in May of 1928, that he had such a bad spill when riding Silver Sue. The association with Silver Sue would appear to have been an unfortunate one for young Wragg, as she had previously given him a fall at Epsom. At Windsor "Sue" was competing in the Queen's Birthday Handicap when she came down, fracturing two of the ribs of her rider and rupturing a kidney. A London specialist was called in and for some time the condition of Wragg was very serious. He did not ride again until the following March, when his first mount, Lillywhite gelding, in the Tathwell Auction Plate at Lincoln proved a winner.

Speaking of accidents brings to mind poor Jimmy Ledson. His pale, thin face rises up before me as I write and so does an occasion when I saw him riding a bicycle at break-neck speed down Sutton Bank, which leads from the Hambleton Hills into the vale stretching away to Thirsk. Next time I saw Ledson I told him that he would end in being killed and asked him if he had joined a suicide club. I was, of course, only joking in a cautionary sort of way, though I was more shocked than surprised when eventually he did meet his death on the King's highway on October 3rd, 1924. He was riding his motor cycle on the Darlington-Richmond road, crashed into a lorry and was killed immediately, on the day after he had attained his thirty-first birthday. I sometimes thought that when in a car or on a motor cycle Ledson fancied he was race riding. I have driven with other jockeys in cars who have certainly had this feeling. They have talked to the car as though it was a horse, hated to see anyone in front or to be passed by anyone, and have, on such occasions, what the Americans call "stepped on the gas," "clucking" just as they would to a horse.

I never considered Ledson's style was "pretty," though it was one which always appealed to the crowd, who mistake arms and legs going for horsemanship and

admirable effort. Dash and courage he had in plenty, and these qualities sometimes got him into trouble. Apprenticed to Hugh Powney, he was at Hambleton with that trainer when he succeeded Godfrey Miller. He went to Newmarket with Powney, but eventually returned to the North and for some time made his headquarters at Richmond and Middleham. Riding a good deal for the Middleham trainers he won the Northumberland Plate on Mynora, 1912; The Guller, 1914; Carpathus, 1923, and he also won the Chester Cup on The Guller in 1913.

His first winner was at Newcastle on April 17th, 1911, when he rode Mr. G. A. W. Young's Very Crooked. He never reached the front rank, and would probably have got more opportunities had he only taken the advice I several times heard given him by people who mattered to "keep your whip still." Just when he was at his best his licence was withdrawn in 1923 for his riding of Mr. Edward Clark's Forerunner in the Edinburgh Gold Cup. Beaten a head for the trophy by West Countryman, Forerunner was not only disqualified on Lord Dalmeny objecting, but Ledson was reported to the Jockey Club. The grounds of objection were that Forerunner had crossed Sun Charmer. Ledson's licence was restored in the first week of the May following and his first winner on resuming riding was Astronomical at Ripon for Lord Barnby, whilst his last winner was Naughty Nancy on September 27th, 1924, at Catterick. I never thought he rode as well after his suspension as he did before and I find entries in my diary giving this opinion. Amongst these records is the following:

"There was certainly nothing in the way of sport at dirty, dismal, depressing Manchester to make us remember the recent meeting, and nothing worth mentioning except the Ledson and Argos Lass incident. You could have got sevens or eights about her, and she led throughout and won in a canter, despite the fact that Ledson had little or no control, and certainly could not help her (not that she needed it). A girth broke, the little racing saddle slipped forward on Argos Lass' neck, and in that helpless position Ledson rode all the way up

the straight. It could not be said that he had an 'arm-chair ride' easily as he won. What a mare she must be! Gomez had a somewhat similar experience on Epsom Lad when he won the Eclipse Stakes in 1901, only his saddle slipped backwards. I also once had an unhappy ten minutes on that good mare Yvette on Middleham Moor. I was riding in a gallop with John Osborne's lot (led by old John himself) coming close behind. Suddenly my saddle began to slip back, and I finished the gallop perched somewhere near Yvette's tail. Poor old John saw the whole thing, and was certain I should 'come it.' He used to refer laughingly to it every time we met."

I will just add that Ledson left £3,964.

Another jockey who met his death was curly-haired Ronald James (known to all and sundry as "Pecky"). He never seemed to grow up and to the end was an unsophisticated, merry, boyish boy, full of pranks, and with big, merry, innocent eyes. Yet he was a married man with a little boy, photos of whom he often showed me, and regarding whose progress at school he often told me with real pride. Ronald James, like Ledson, never quite got there in this profession and I know felt he was rather left out in the cold during the last year or two of his life. He often had to say "I can't do the weight" and other greater stars appeared in the jockey firmament. He was born at Dunsford, Exeter, and was apprenticed to W. Griggs.

When out of his time he became light-weight to Lord George Dundas. I fancy a series of accidents had affected his nerve a little. In October, 1927, when Arran Chief fell with him at Newcastle, he had a wrist broken, and in 1933 he had a bad fall at Stockton when riding Glomach for Sir Keith Fraser. His mount slipped up and he was taken straight to the local hospital, at which I was able to brighten his days of inactivity at which he chafed a good deal. Just after the accident Sir Keith Fraser came to me at Thirsk and asked me if I could find out what had become of his colours which he wanted to use at that meeting. I rang up the Stockton hospital from the weighing-room and we got the colours to Thirsk in time.

It was some weeks before "Pecky" rode again, indeed he did not get a deal of riding afterwards. The end came on June 14th, 1934, at Beverley. On the previous day he rode Good Fish in the Hurn Selling Welter Handicap. His mount slipped coming round Hudson's Corner and whether James was thrown against the rails or threw himself out of the saddle will never be known. He hit the rails with his head, with the result that the base of his skull was fractured. He was conscious when the doctor got to him, but an hour later he relapsed and died in hospital during the night before his wife, who set off immediately from Woolwich, could reach Beverley. I went on to London from Beverley and was shocked to hear next day that the poor little fellow was dead. Like many other horsemen, James imagined he was still riding most of the time he was delirious. I have known jockeys' arms and legs to "go" when unconscious, and huntsmen to cheer hounds when in a similar state.

Just behind James when he had the fatal slip was Davy McGuigan, son of Mr. John McGuigan of Ayr. David is one of a family long connected with racing. His father has exported more good horses to Africa and Australia than most men, including Night Raid (sire of "the wonder horse," Pharlap) to the latter country. Quick tempered though he may be, I do not know a more generous, tender-hearted soul on the Turf. He is always out to help the under-dog and anyone in trouble and I know of a hundred kindly actions he has done which he never intended to come to light. His son Davy has the same quiet voice and Scotch accent as his father, an equal sense of humour and a face full of expression. He was born March 25th, 1905, and was apprenticed to his father. His first ride was Buzz Off, April 4th, 1919, and on this horse he won at his home meeting at Ayr. For a couple of years he has lived at Malton and riding for Easterby, then for Hubert Hartigan, and in 1935 for Captain C. Elsey.

Mention above of poor Ronald James takes me back to the very beginning of my racing career, when I used to see a good deal of that curious fellow Elmer James,

who rode for George Drake. Elmer was one of the wittiest men I ever met, something of a gymnast and full of practical jokes. He came of an American family prominent on the Turf over there and I hadn't heard of him for years till I read the memories of a once famous American jockey, Winnie O'Connor. At the very outset of his book, *Jockeys, Crooks and Kings*, the name of Elmer James crops up. It seems that, like O'Connor, he was apprenticed to Bill Daly, who was in the habit of giving his boys a sound thrashing if they were left at the start, or didn't ride to orders. On the first occasion Elmer was "for it," he ran the American trainer out of the house with a six-shooter in his hand. Elmer and his gun were forthwith ordered off the premises. O'Connor goes on to say :

"In my kidhood the James family were pretty prominent. Even now if someone pulled a gun on me and said he was one of the well-known James family from St. Jo, Missouri, I'd be earnestly interested. Of course I don't think Elmer would really have killed old 'Father' Bill. I met his father later on and had no trouble with Frank James, who was acting as a track official. Jessie and Frank are no longer with us, but Elmer is racing a stable of horses in Canada."

W. Bullock wasn't always the grave, almost severe-looking fellow he is to-day. I can remember him just after he had won the Derby and Oaks when he was the life and soul of any party he was in. Not that winning the Derby had made him financially safe for life. All he got for that was a glass of white wine and a cigar. Born at Morpeth in Northumberland in 1885, Billy Bullock and his elder brother Bertram have long been friends of mine. If there is anything in predestination they were inevitably born into the racing game. They were the sons of a trainer, and several of their forebears were connected both with the Turf and coursing. Indeed their father turned his attention to the latter sport, training greyhounds at Gosforth Park. One of his sons is a well-known slipper to-day, whilst Billie's uncle Ralph was a good class jockey of whom it was once written :

"He was not only a very first rate jockey, but his

conduct was beyond reproach, for he had none of the impertinent familiarities about him which characterises so many jockeys of the present day. Neat, but not effeminate, in his dress, he set so good an example to his class, that he received every encouragement from noblemen and gentlemen. As a horseman he was resolute, not only on the flat, but across country, and as a jockey his patience and knowledge of pace enabled him to attain higher honours than many of his seniors."

He rode the 1861 Derby winner, Kettledrum, and died so long ago as 1863. It was in 1908 that W. Bullock won the Derby and Oaks on Signorinetta. Only three jockeys had won both races on the same animal. Bullock told me some most interesting stories of the mare's love for her Italian owner, and the reciprocity. For some time Bullock rode in Denmark and in 1924 was leading jockey there and, despite being so ill that his life hung in the balance, he was again champion jockey in 1925, and again in 1926-7. In 1928 he returned to England. Two years later he accepted a retainer to ride in Germany and for a year or two has been back in this country riding for Captain Elsey's Malton stable. It was at Malton, by the way, he was apprenticed to the still living Tom Bruckshaw, when that wonderful old man was consul at Whitewall, a venture which proved anything but a remunerative speculation to Tom.

I fancy Bullock, still feeling fit and full of vitality, has often felt cut to the quick at being passed over for younger jockeys when rides in big races have been going. He has very plainly shown us in recent times that he has lost none of his old dash. He used to ride over hurdles, is widely travelled, and a cultured man. One of his brothers is a well-known artist and on the staff of the Art Department of Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Frank Bullock, who retired from the saddle in 1925, is of course no connection of Bertram and William. Frank was born in Australia, June 25th, 1885. He was apprenticed to Jack Brewer, who had not been long training in this country before he sent for Frank, then about eighteen years old. He won the Manchester Cup

on Airship, and the Stewards' Cup (Goodwood) on Xeny, both in 1905, but the same year he went back to Australia. He stayed in his home country until 1907 when Brewer persuaded him to return to England.

Reg. Day in 1908 offered him a retainer to ride as first jockey for the ex-Kaiser, and for five seasons Bullock headed the list of winning jockeys in the Fatherland. His engagement came to an end in 1913 when he once more came to England. Try as he would he only succeeded in winning two English classics—the One Thousand Guineas and the Oaks, both of which he won on Saucy Sue in 1925. Frank once told me that his father, who was well known on the English Turf, for many years was a champion broncho-rider and rough-rider in Australia. Frank had a son riding here for a while, but he became too heavy like his father, who found wasting too much of a strain. He trained at Chantilly for some years, having from 1929 to 1932 had M. Wittouck as his main patron. One of the most courteous of men there was never anything of the swashbuckler about him, and in many ways he was a pattern jockey and a wholesome influence on his fellows. As I write he has just expressed his intention of coming to England to train.

Cecil Ray is another imported jockey and a most likeable fellow. He is really an Englishman, having been born at Bromley, Kent, but he served his apprenticeship with P. T. Johnson at Johannesburg, and rode over 700 winners before he returned to England. He became associated with the late Eddie de Mestre and Tim O'Sullivan, both of whom he had known long before he commenced to ride for them. Cecil Ray is a man of wide experience, but one who never gives an opinion until he is asked. He can then talk better and more interestingly than most men. The only exceptions to his reticence are when he has seen an apprentice make a bad mistake in a race. On such occasions I have sometimes seen him call the boy quietly aside and tell him in such a tactful, kindly way what he had done wrong that the tip could not help but be taken and helpful. There are not many of the older brigade (to which Ray belongs) who will take the trouble with "kids," and I

have always had a kindly feeling for Ray because of his fatherly interest in this direction. He had a boy of his own apprenticed to Stanley Wootton, but he seems to have dropped out of racing. Ray senior won the 1933 Irish Derby on Harinero. On Saturday, November 10th, 1934, he rode Cross Wind in the Ormerod Plate at Liverpool, the race being won by Lord Derby's Apulia against which Ray lodged an objection. The Aintree Stewards not only estreated the deposit of Ray but reported him to the Stewards of the Jockey Club who withdrew his licence.

Dick Perryman was born at Mitcham in 1901 and served his apprenticeship with Fred Leader, who together with his wife was killed in a motoring smash when returning to Newmarket from the Ascot meeting of 1933, only a few hours after Gainslaw, which he trained for Mr. H. J. Simms, had won the Gold Vase. I have carefully and critically watched all the jockeys riding during the past thirty years and none of them have more delighted me than Richard Perryman. He seems to embody all the essentials to successful race-riding—head, hands and courage, together with some indescribable, intuitive sympathy between himself and the horses he rides. There are some men—and some women too!—who, as soon as they mount not only seem part of their horses but invite and gain mutual co-partnership. I have seen Perryman get on to a horse which he had never ridden before and which had not gone well for other jockeys, but which was “a perfect gentleman” with him. Surely there must be some mesmeric influence possessed by men like Perryman. I once asked him, after he had ridden a hitherto mad-brained, bolting, bad-mouthed, tear-away beast and found him as quiet as a sheep, how he did it. I hoped he would tell me some secret like Rarey was supposed to possess. I had watched Perryman walk the horse past the stands with a slack rein, clapping his neck and possibly telling him he was a sweet-tempered angel.

Perryman laughed when I questioned him and replied: “I kid to them.” That doesn't convey much except that Perryman gives queer tempered animals the impression

that they have a master on their backs, but one who has complete confidence in them—and in himself. In 1925 Perryman won the Manchester Cup on Winalot and the same year he married a daughter of Robert Beedle, long head-man to R. Sherwood and now a trainer on his own behalf. They spent their honeymoon in India, where Dick rode for a time. He returned to England in time for the opening of the 1926 flat racing season. In that year he rode his first Classic winner—Mr. A. de Rothschild's Pillion in the One Thousand Guineas. Two years later he won the Cesarewitch on Arctic Star. He won the Gimcrack at York in 1932 on Young Lover and the Cambridgeshire of 1934 on Wychwood Abbot. It was known before then that in 1935 he would ride as first jockey to Lord Derby though he would continue to ride for Mr. Anthony de Rothschild (to whom he was first jockey 1920-34) when not required by those having first claim on his services. The second day at the York May meeting, 1935, will always stand out as a cameo in his life, for he rode four winners that afternoon.

There have been many instances of jockeys having given up riding for one reason or another and then attempting to "come back" only to find one of the two cruel facts—that they had been forgotten, or that they were actually "back numbers." One of the exceptions is Charles Smirke. He was "off" for five years and on having his licence restored he had his first mount on Mr. M. H. Benson's Equi-Distant at Newmarket on October 23rd, 1933. The following year he won the Derby and St. Leger on Windsor Lad. That indeed was a triumphant "come back." Charles James William Smirke was born in London in 1902 and is the son of a boxer. He is one of the many instances of a close connection between the ring and the Turf. The history, of the Turf is full of them and Smirke himself is no novice with the gloves on. Indeed at one time it seemed probable that he would go in for boxing as a means of a livelihood, but he was such a light-weight it was decided to send him to the Treadwell House academy presided over by Stanley Wootton.

From the outset he showed considerable promise. He had his first mount in public in 1922, for Stanley Wootton wisely never hurries his apprentices into the limelight. His first winning ride was not long deferred, as at the April meeting at Derby he had the pleasure of catching the eye of the judge on Vitalba. At the end of the season his bag of winners was 39. The two following seasons he climbed steadily in the winning jockeys list, his totals of winning rides being 56 and 78 respectively. In 1925 he had the pleasure of winning the Grand Prix in Paris, his mount on that occasion being *Luminiere*. Season 1927 saw him occupying third place in the championship list behind Weston and F. Fox. That year he had been first jockey to the Clarehaven Lodge stable of the late P. P. Gilpin and in the Derby he had ridden *Black Watch* into third place behind *Felstead* and *Flamingo*. In the previous March he had married Miss Alice Hyams, a daughter of George Hyams, the Epsom trainer and thus became a brother-in-law to George Duller. It was in the following August that a crisis came into his life following his riding of *Welcome Gift* in the Home Bred Two Year Old Plate at Gatwick.

He had a really sincere welcome back in 1933—another instance of the kindly cordiality of racing men to which I have already referred. There were those, of course, who shook their heads and said he was too long out of the saddle to be able to resume his quondam position. Smirke, however, had seen to it that he had kept himself physically fit and was determined to show the croakers that he was as good as ever he was. He soon did so and was fortunate in having opportunities given him to re-establish his reputation. He had accomplished this before he won the Derby and Leger of 1934 on *Windsor Lad* and he has gone on riding consistently ever since. In 1929 his younger brother Alfred was apprenticed to Stanley Wootton. He had his first race in public at Newbury on September 27th, 1929 and while still an apprentice he married Miss M. Friday at Epsom. In 1934 he took out a licence under National Hunt Rules and in 1935 became a pony race jockey.

I must mention one other very capable jockey—the

nice-mannered William Stephenson, who, like many others, came into the racing game via the hunting field. I must hasten to add, however, that his father rode steeplechasing as an amateur, and that the family have for longer than I can remember bred a long line of jumpers with the prefix Crawley. These Crawley Fairys, Crawley Daisies, Crawley Marigolds and so on have for years run at Sedgefield and other little North country N.H. fixtures. Thus William Stephenson was reared in an atmosphere of both Turf and chase, and heard little else talked about in the winter months but hunting, hounds and steeplechasers

He was born in 1913, and is the son of the late Harry Stephenson of Crawleas Farm, Leasingthorne, Ferryhill. Willie's father was educated at the good old school at Barnard Castle and was one of a substantial farming family in the County of Durham, which continued the sporting traditions founded by that great sportsman Ralph Lambton, who so long hunted the South Durham pack in what was known as the "Sedgefield Country." Sedgefield was then the Melton of the North, and at the little Hunt meeting there Harry Stephenson won the Londonderry Hunters' Cup outright. When he died his brother Ben continued to farm Crawleas and to breed 'chasers.

Willie's mother went to live at Aycliffe, near Darlington, and it was when hunting with the South Durham Hounds (then mastered by Lord Southampton, whose daughter Major V. Beatty married) that Major Beatty recognised his courage, hands and horsemanship, his wife to-be calling attention to the boy who had won a lot of prizes in the show-ring and in pony scampers. He became apprenticed to Major Beatty, the family then going to Newmarket. W. Stephenson soon made his mark and good judges saw in him a ready-made jockey. He rode Niantic a dead heater with Medal in the 1927 Cambridgeshire. Fortunately neither success, the congratulations of those competent to praise, nor flattery of sycophants, who have ruined many young jockeys, have affected him. W. Stephenson has not been without his share of accidents and incidents. At Carlisle, July,

1928, he was winning a race on Nobody Loves Me when his mount shied at an imprint left on the track by the matting which was put down between races to preserve the turf from damage by pedestrians. Two months later when riding Symphonic at Alexandra Park his mount slipped up, the rider being badly bruised.

Promptitude gave him a winning ride in the 1929 Manchester November Handicap, and when the curtain was rung down on that season's flat racing, Stephenson returned for hunting to his native heath. He began 1930 badly, as in the first month of the year he had an accident in the hunting field in which he sustained, among other severe injuries, a fractured pelvis. He was kept out of the saddle for many weeks, and at the end of the season he went to India—his first visit to that country. He stated at the time to the author of this book that while he regretted missing the hunting he felt that he could hunt when older, and a trip to India would broaden his mind, and that such opportunities could only come when he was young. In 1931 he met with another accident at Lincoln, and again when the flat racing season came to an end he went to India. Willie, who has for some years lived at Newmarket, had his first ride over hurdles at Catterick in November, 1932. He has grown very tall and has to waste hard to keep his weight down.

CHAPTER V

NATIONAL HUNT JOCKEYS

AS a hunting man, and one who has always had a great love for National Hunt sport, I have a profound admiration for many of the jockeys who "go round" in the winter. For fifteen years I acted as judge at a considerable number of winter jumping meetings, and prior to that ran a few alleged race-horses at these fixtures. Thus I have for a long time been in close touch with all those connected with the game. We have travelled thousands of miles together in pre-motor days, stayed together at hotels, met in weighing-rooms, and so forth. Then, too, I have watched them closely in my official position in fair weather and foul, on good horses and bad, on all sorts of courses. All this has given me an unique opportunity of getting an intimate knowledge of their lives, their outlook, their inwardness, indeed almost everything about them. They were, in my early days, and are still, a wonderful crowd, constantly reminding one of Lindsay Gordon's lines :

"No game was ever worth a rap
For a rational man to play,
Into which no danger or mishap
Can possibly find its way."

It is always astonishing to me that more men who admire good horsemanship, and are really keen on racing, *quâ* racing, do not take a greater interest in the winter sport and do not throw more bouquets to the gallant jockeys and gallant horses concerned in it. There is, of course, a good deal of limelight centred upon each Grand National, and the horses and riders, figuring therein ; in the Grand Military at Sandown, in Chelten-

ham and certain important cross-country events at Manchester and elsewhere, but on the whole those who carry a spare neck and spare limbs in their pockets, who ride all sorts of horses, over all sorts of courses, and in all sorts of weather, come in for very small kudos, and equally small remuneration. Is it that the glamour of the paddock drawn out by summer suns is missing? Is it that the sport is less "fashionable" (a hateful word in connection with sport)? Is it that jumping lacks the tradition of the flat? Or is it that the conditions overhead and underfoot are so often uninviting? Frankly, I cannot give an answer. There have been big *coups* brought off in my time under N.H. rules. There is everything—more, I think, than on the flat—which appeals to the true sportsman, and, what is more, there is a homeliness, a genial, leisurely atmosphere associated with racing in the winter which becomes more and more lacking amid the commercialism which obsesses "the flat." There is a considerable number of prominent owners and trainers who never think of going on to a race-course after the Manchester November Handicap, and it is the same with a very large number of the public, who seem to prefer sprint races, in which they see little of horses or horsemanship, to steeplechases and hurdle races in which they may see much. To me their mentality is an enigma, and I doubt whether their affection for racing is centred right. When they belittle the N.H. game and all connected with it, smile indulgently, and relegate it to a slightly superior form of "flapping" or circus performance, then I cross swords with them and know that they have no real love for, or knowledge of, all that one means by sport and horsemanship.

Since I began to take an active part in racing, conditions have changed much, and for the better, in connection with jumping. One thing which has not altered is the hardihood, fortitude, gameness, sportsmanship, and, in many cases, admirable horsemanship of those who "go round."

They did many queer things in the old days of steeple-chasing. Indeed it is not exaggerating to say that at one time it was a hot-bed of malpractice and villainy. Old-

time jockeys have confessed to me that they wilfully rode amateurs and each other over the wings of hurdles and fences, and round the wrong sides of flags. Also that they regularly contrived to fall off horses which were "not wanted," and which were going too well. It must have taken some practice as well as courage for a man to purposely "come it" towards the end of a 'chase or hurdle race.

At the 1934 Newmarket December Sales a once famous steeplechase jockey told an amusing story. Once when he was riding for an owner (who had not the reputation of being generous), he had a fall. The owner asked him if he was hurt. "No," was the almost tearful reply, "but I've lost twenty quids' worth of teeth." "Never mind," said the owner, producing four fivers, "get yourself another set." As a matter of fact, the jockey had his teeth in his pocket, a not uncommon practice with such jump jockeys who wear artificial dentures. On a second occasion the jockey secured another £20 on the same plea, but unfortunately for him he made his joke public, so that when he endeavoured to arouse sympathy to the extent of a third £20 after a fall, he was advised to feel in his pocket to see if by any chance they had fallen in there. He knew then that the game was up.

There have been two or three generations of jockeys in my time and, as a whole, they have been a delightful set of fellows, many of them possessed of skill quite equal to that of their famous brethren on the flat who have made almost as many pounds in a year as they have made shillings, and have become national heroes.

Taking the jockeys who were riding over fences thirty years ago in alphabetical order, we begin with Ivor Anthony, the eldest of the three jockey brothers. He went on riding till he was forty-one, relinquishing his licence in 1925 after an accident at Ludlow the year before. Although a National never came his way as a jockey he was a great horseman and trained Kellsboro Jack to win the 1933 Grand National. For many years he assisted the late Hon. Aubrey Hastings in the management of the Wroughton stable, and on the death of that great sports-

man he took full control. When he was riding as a professional his brothers John Randolph (born January 21st, 1890) and Owen (born November 7th, 1886,) were amateurs. They were all born near Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, and are the sons of a Welsh farmer who had a family of twelve. As an amateur Jack Anthony rode three winners of the Grand National, Glenside in 1911, Ally Sloper, 1915 and Troytown, 1920. The first of these was a lucky chance mount, as F. Mason, who was to have ridden Glenside, broke a leg a few days before Aintree. It was only on the Sunday before the great race that Anthony was offered the mount and he was then 7lb. too heavy. The owner was unwilling for him to use a 7lb. saddle so Jack Anthony had to waste hard. After his third Grand National victory in 1920 he turned professional, as the French Turf authorities would not allow him to ride Troytown as an amateur in their big steeplechase, in which, by the way, Troytown met his death.

Jack Anthony rode in twelve English Nationals and his name is writ large in the history of 'chasing. He rode his first winner in 1906 at Ludlow, when he was sixteen, and continued to ride in public till 1927. The following year he commenced training at Letcombe Regis with Mr. J. H. Whitney as one of his main patrons. In 1930 he paid one of his periodical visits to America and when there broke a leg which has since caused him a good deal of trouble. The burly deep-voiced, ever stolid Owen had to give up riding owing to increasing weight, and after he had become a trainer he turned out Music Hall to win the 1922 Grand National. The whole story of Music Hall would make a wonderful Turf romance. I have related part of it in another book.

The Anthonys were getting a lot of riding at the time of which I speak and so was Leonard Birch, who rode the 1904 Grand National winner (Moifaa), and who met his death through an accident to his spine whilst riding Black Ivory at Sandown in 1906. Poor Birch was game to the end and came to one or two race meetings in a bath chair when he was a dying man. His son, who is also a steeplechase jockey, was with W. Renwick at

Richmond, Yorkshire, in 1930, and impressed us in the North but didn't get many opportunities.

Bob Chadwick I always thought a typical steeplechase jockey in every particular. He was a good horseman, resolute, fearless, would ride anything over anything, and knew how to nurse a horse as well as drive the lazy or tricky ones over their fences. What a history of National Hunt sport he could write if he would put pen to paper and tell us all he knows of the merry (and mysterious) past. He spent a good deal of time in the North with "Fatty" Swainson (still alive at Catterick, though now blind), who trained for Mr. David Cooper at Catterick and the late Mr. Bourke. Later he went to France with Watson of Richmond. After a time at Hambleton with Raisin, Bob went to Tom Coulthwaite, for whom he rode many winners. He had exasperating luck in the Grand National, being second in 1909 on Judas, and second again in 1911 on Rathnally. He would probably have won the latter race had he not had to pull up his mount sharp to avoid a collision. He won the jumping classic, however, in 1910 on Jenkinstown, a horse which Coulthwaite said required more work than any four to keep him right. Mr. Stanley Howard, his owner, who had previously won the National with Eremon, told me that at Sandown in 1908 young Daly said his father wanted him (Mr. Howard) to buy Jenkinstown for £600, as he was certain a winner at Aintree. Mr. Howard said he could not afford to do so, to which the young Irishman replied: "My father said if you talked like that I was to say 'damn the money,' I'll send the horse to Coulthwaite for you." Both Eremon and Jenkinstown sleep in the burial ground at Danebury, with Bay Middleton, Crucifix, and other horses which made their names upon the Turf.

Despite all his falls, exposures and hard life Bob Chadwick is well and active behind the scenes of the Turf as an employee in Colling's stable at Newmarket. His son, "Young Bob" Chadwick, is with Peacock at Middleham. He was apprenticed with Leader, and with limited chances (for Peacock does not train many jumpers) he has done well in the North.

George Clancy was another steeplechase jockey who was doing well in my early days. I remember him as being one of the first cross-country to pull up his leathers a hole or two. Many were certain that he would "come it" if a horse made a mistake, or pecked, but he didn't and he won a lot of races. He was Lancashire born but went to Ireland as a boy to be apprenticed to Gradwell, returning to England in his teens with a good deal of that determination which has marked so many of the steeplechase jockeys who have come over from that country.

Those of us who have hunted in Ireland have marvelled at the way the young lads will ride green young horses over everything which comes their way, with or without a saddle and with any sort of patched-up bridles. Some of them may not be pretty horsemen, they may break every theory and many rules, but they get there. It was to Mr. Lort Phillips that Clancy went when he returned to England. Then he went to Bob Gore, for whom he rode many winners—at least thirty on Bornalira alone. He began to train in 1906.

Poor Paddy Cowley was a real rough Irish diamond. He was the life and soul of every party with whom he travelled to race meetings and kept us all laughing. I think his nerve went a bit at the finish, as I remember him saying to me in weighing-room at the defunct Shincliffe meeting, as he put a stiffish glass of brandy out of sight before going out to ride in a 'chase: "They won't let us dope the horses so I'm doping me'self." He was killed shortly afterwards at the ill-fated Blackpool meeting.

George Goswell, who had his first mount in the National in 1903, was getting a lot of riding and always struck me as being a jockey who would stand no nonsense, either in a race from other jockeys, or from owners. He never managed to win a National though lots of other big races fell to him. His two sons, Gordon and John, were both born at Bangor and both ride well under National Hunt rules, though Gordon is now doing more hunting and farming than racing. They are almost as keen about fishing as they are about race riding and

often bring their rods to meetings near which are waters in which they can throw a fly. It is a strange mixture—the furious fun of 'chase riding and the pacific meandering by the waterside. Life is made up of strange contradictions, and many jockeys have had queer hobbies which have, on the face of them, seemed the antithesis of their normal association.

There were few more astute men "going round" in my early youth than R. H. Harper. He was "a character" in every respect, and not least in his dress. Sartorially he was always a cross between an old family coachman and a very respectable nonconformist lay preacher. In speech he was a dry, courteous Yorkshireman who was not to be drawn either by strangers or by anyone else who tried to pump him. He once remarked to me: "If I told all I know about half the men in this paddock they would be warned off." Certainly in his day, as I have already said, they did some strange things under N.H. rules.

There was one North-country vet. who made a good income out of "speedy balls" prior to the days when "doping" became illegal, and perhaps afterwards. Then there were jockeys who did not scruple to fall off conveniently if they found horses which were "not wanted" were going too well. There were others who deliberately rode jockeys on fancied horses over the "wings," or otherwise so "took care" of them that they had no chance of winning. Somehow, too, they seemed to "get away" with it. Perhaps Stewards allowed more latitude in those days, perhaps they didn't see quite so much then, maybe the jockeys chose the time and place of their illicit actions so well that they could not be seen. Bob Harper was born at Risby Park, East Yorkshire, on August 30th, 1862. He was the son of an extensive farmer who bred hunters which Bob commenced to "school" before he had left school. He was never apprenticed to a trainer, but came to the Turf like many others via the hunting field, and the "flapping" meetings which then abounded, and which were, with all their villainy, not a bad school for teaching a steeplechase jockey to hold his own against all comers. He began

to ride under rules as an amateur, his first winner being Ranger at Wetherby in 1884. He won a lot of the then popular red-coat races before the late George Menzies secured him for his Coxhoe (Co. Durham) stable.

Menzies was a hunting farmer who had got a taste for racing by riding a few of his horses to victory at his home meetings—Shincliffe and Sedgfield. He had been training for a year or two before he persuaded Harper to join him and give him the benefit of his experience and skill. The two men both had their heads screwed on the right way (though poor Menzies went wrong in his at the end of his life) and brought off a number of *coups* which resulted in additional boxes having to be built at Coxhoe. In 1902 Harper transferred his allegiance to Mr. George Gunter at Wetherby, and that good sportsman acknowledges ungrudgingly how much he owes to his quondam assistant trainer, head-man, stable jockey and general adviser. Mr. Gunter who was soon to shine as the leading cross-country rider, was just beginning his Turf career and could not have had anyone better than Bob Harper as his mentor. In 1902 Bob rode between forty and fifty winners, and during his long connection with the winter game he had both jaws fractured, both legs and both arms broken more than once and ribs broken on fifty occasions. Yet he always came up smiling when he'd got sound again and never seemed to lose his nerve.

Whilst riding Marcolica in 1912, Bob Harper made what is one of the record jumps. On the Wetherby gallops, which were ploughed out during the war, his mount took off fifteen feet before a hurdle, landed twenty-seven feet over it and slid a further eighteen feet before falling and pushing its rider another twenty feet along the ground. This beats the renowned "lep" of Chandler, in 1847, on the old Warwick race-course. This was thirty-nine feet from take-off to landing, Marcolica's "lep" being forty feet. Capt. P. Bewicke also lays claim to having beaten the jump of Chandler. When riding Homeward Bound (a 15 hands horse) at Plumpton, another horse fell in front of him at a fence and Homeward Bound in clearing it fell. The distance

from take-off to where he fell (allowing three feet for the fence) was forty-two feet.

During the war Harper retired from race riding, and when racing was resumed he was granted a licence to act as starter and officiated at Wetherby and Sedgefield. A story is told that, having difficulty with a big field in a hurdle race at Wetherby, he at last exclaimed: "Will those of you who *are* trying come up here into line?" He has a dry humour of his own and a wonderful fund of stories regarding the bad old days of racing. Once when he had taken some of Mr. Gunter's horses to Haydock Park he was tackled by an "information seeker." Harper, taking an old envelope and a pencil from his pocket, said: "I tell you—that's I, isn't it? You tell someone else, that's II, he tells someone else . . . making a third stroke. . . ." How many's that? "Three," replied the expectant punter. "No it isn't," said Harper, "it's one hundred and eleven . . . so good morning."

He began his hunting career with the Holderness in the days of the "old" Sir Tatton Sykes of hunting and racing fame. In later years he rode thousands of miles on a bicycle to attend distant fixtures. Failing eyesight has now laid him aside, but up to 1930 he rode young horses to hounds in the Bramham Moor and York and Ainsty countries, and when he relinquished his racing licence taught the children of some famous sportsmen and sportswomen in these countries to ride.

Frank and George Lyall were both bold horsemen and had their share of riding though they were on the heavy side. Both the brothers were pretty forcibly outspoken at all times and could hold their own in an argument as well as in a race. They are the sons of Joseph Goodson Lyall, a Lincolnshire farmer, who prior to becoming a trainer was an auctioneer. He trained at Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Sleaford and Newark before going to his present quarters at Bracebridge. He was always keener on the National Hunt sport than on the flat, as have been his sons. Frank is the eldest, and I shall always think he was desperately unlucky not to win the 1907 Grand National on Ravenscliffe.

I know Tom Coulthwaite jeers at this idea and that

long before the race he was confident of Eremon's success. The horse's public form hardly justified this optimism. The Hednesford trainer, however, has always been an optimist and it is true that after events have often justified this attitude. Frank Lyall had to waste to ride Ravenscliffe (trained by my old friend "Bob" Robson) and even so was compelled to ride in a light saddle which was not really fitted for a big jumping course like Aintree. He broke a stirrup leather, which was not surprising, he was bumped into and he was baulked. Indeed he had almost all the bad luck which could come to him in a race, which, because of these accidents and incidents, must always be a good deal of a lottery. Frank Lyall was second in the 1912 National on Bloodstone, and it rested with Bob Lyall, a much younger brother (who was apprenticed to his father), to win the great event in 1931 on Grakle, trained by Tom Coulthwaite.

Writing quite recently¹ regarding the question of balance, gravity and the forward seat, Mr. J. G. Lyall told us an interesting story regarding Frank, and incidentally mentioned his other sons. He urged beginners not to be dismayed if they had no opportunities of gaining experience in a military or other riding school, and went on :

"Many of the finest riders of my time never saw the inside of a school. Here's a couple of old friends of mine taken at random—Mr. Alec Goodman and Mr. J. Maunsell Richardson, both with a couple of Grand National winners on their escutcheons. Their training was done in the hunting-field, and you can see the likes of them on their ponies or cobs at the covert-side any hunting-morning.

"Be it not thought that I write in a carping spirit of Weedon or any of the military riding-schools ; but they are not inevitable. Here hangs a tale. In the early days of the war one of my boys was circling round in a cadet parade at Tidworth. They were being inspected by the late Earl of Harrington (then Lord Petersham), who stood in the centre with the riding-master. Presently, after making a scrutiny of the cadets, Lord Petersham,

¹ In *Horse and Hound*.

pointing to my son, called out, 'Hey, man, drop your heels there, or you'll never ride a horse as long as you live.' Frank saw his lordship out of his eye-corner having a bit of a 'confab' with the riding-master, with whom he was a bit 'pally,' as he used to ride his wicked horses for him. Presently, when they trooped out at the exit, Lord Petersham went to Frank and laughingly remarked, 'That was a damned good shot of mine, Lyall—what do you think?' It so happened that Frank had ridden several 'chasers and a few winners for his lordship, but of course, he had not recognised him in uniform. Incidentally, this boy was quite a precocious horseman, and, I think, rode the youngest under both Rules, notably on a two year old at Doncaster the day before Throstle won the St. Leger, just before he was eleven years old, and he rode in a three-mile 'chase on a horse of mine called Bantam at Leicester before he was thirteen. He made all the running for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, but got beaten by Ford of Fyne, who, I think, was fourth in the National. Later he piloted that erratic varmint Bloodstone second to Jerry M. in the Grand National, and another year finished fifth on Ravenscliffe, whom he rode for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles with a broken leather. When he was twelve years old this same boy won 97 first prizes show-jumping for Mr. Dodsworth, of Nottingham, on those two wonderful jumpers Topthorne and Snowdrop.

"Old Dodsworth ('Daddy') was just about as fine a roughrider as I ever saw, and although perfectly illiterate he could expatiate most correctly on the science of horsemanship and the forward seat, of which he was a true exponent, and, I believe, almost its godfather. One of 'Daddy's' maxims was, 'Don't lose your temper and hit a horse when avoidable, but when necessary be careful to hit him exactly at the right moment, hit him in the right place, and hit him darned hard.' This is sound and worth pasting in your hat.

"Of my five sons who have been steeplechase jockeys, four have ridden many times over Liverpool, and two of them have been placed first, second, fourth, fifth and sixth in Grand Nationals.

"Without entering into a discussion on fences, I may

just add that the most scathing remark I have heard emanate from any of them has been, 'After you have got round once, Dad, they do just grin a trifle at you as you approach the second round, especially if you are on a semi-beaten horse.'

"Perhaps two of the most exquisite horsemen that have come within my ken when hounds really ran and whom I have ridden alongside of many a time were Mr. J. Maunsell Richardson, before mentioned, one time Master of the Brocklesby, and of Reugny and Disturbance fame, and Tom Firr, many years huntsman to the Quorn. Neither of them had an accentuated forward seat, yet neither threw himself right back, and they were beautiful to watch as they skimmed over a country. Tom Firr was a reticent man but he would wax almost satirical when discussing a newcomer. 'Humph!' he would say; 'rides with his knees half way up to his chin.' Now for the quintessence of elegance in hacking paces commend me to the late Mr. Arthur Coventry, who so ably started for the Jockey Club. There are many riding-masters at the summer shows perhaps equally attractive, but it must be borne in mind that they are mounted on perfect hacks, whilst Mr. Coventry had to take on very often miserable skins as he cantered to the post. Furthermore, Mr. Coventry could hold his own with the best over either the Vale of Belvoir or any steeplechase course.

"I exhort all novices to cultivate the forward seat. Take short hold of your reins, drop your hands well down each side of your horse's neck, linking your surplus rein across for a prop, grip like grim death with knees and legs, assume your boldest 'here goes the last of the Cardigans' air, and all will be well. It's like sitting in an easy-chair. As you advance from the novitiate stage and you gain confidence you will find your guardian angel suggesting to you that you let your leathers out a hole or two and assume less of the show-jumping seat; especially will this be so if you have taken, say, 100 tosses, broken both collar-bones, fractured a few ribs, and put your shoulder out. But you will have the satisfaction of knowing that things would have been far worse had you learnt to throw yourself back.

"I firmly believe that the world astride rides one or perhaps two holes shorter all round to-day than it did fifty years ago. In this matter the world astride is, in my opinion, right."

And now Bob Lyall has joined the ranks of trainers. It is wise to begin, like Jack Mason, to get a stable together before he hands in his colours. He is to train at South Thorsby, Alford, Lincolnshire, a county which has been famous for its steeplechasers and bloodstock generally (Manganese, Apology, and Galopin were all bred there) and its cross-country riders almost since National Hunt sport began.

R. V. Lyall has, since the war, been a most consistent "jump jockey" and, though he has taken rides as they have come along, he has been far less often on the ground than most of his contemporaries, though he had a bad fall at the always pleasant Brocklesby meeting in 1935. After many weeks in Grimsby hospital he decided to hand in his colours and devote his time to training. There are, I think, a number of contributory reasons for his immunity—he does not ride quite as short as some, he presents his horse at their fences better than many and always seems to have them balanced; also, when he finds an animal is really so done and distressed under him as to make it both useless, cruel and dangerous both to the animal and himself to go on, he pulls up. I don't say he often does this, but I have seen him use his wise judgment in such cases, which judgment is applauded by owners who have eyes to see and knowledge to understand. There are, of course, some possessing neither of these qualities, who prefer their horses to be forced on in the hope that all the others will fall and that they may in that way snatch a victory. This has been done on rare occasions. More often continuing to ride a tired, beaten animal has resulted in it falling and breaking one of its own, or its jockey's limbs. Not a few horses which have been pushed and punished when rolling, lobbing and sobbing, have not been worth a cockle afterwards.

A dependable, superior, quiet mannered youth, who is able to defend himself both with his fists and his

tongue, everybody who knows him will wish Bob luck as a trainer. I have known him ever since he commenced to ride, and during the many chats we have had together have had ample opportunity to gather that he is a sound judge of a horse, that he has a good deal of character, an opinion and will of his own. I have sometimes wondered if he really enjoys racing, if it is only a profession with him, or if he has become surfeited—"stalled" as we term it when applied to horses which have had so much corn given them that they are temporarily sick of it. One thing is certain, R. V. L. does not wear his heart on his sleeve. He is one of those men whose thoughts are not easy to read from their faces. It was so even when he rode Grakle into the paddock after winning the National. He might have been a parson in a church procession.

Which reminds me that on one occasion a parson *did* ride in the Grand National, and when some busy-body sought an interview with his bishop to tell him the Rev. Mr. Drake was going to ride in the Aintree classic, all the satisfaction he got from his lordship was: "Then I'll bet you even money he wins!" The horse Parson Drake rode was Sir George Wombwell's Bridegroom, a half-bred. He not only got the course but finished fifth, and but for a bit of bad luck might have won.

To revert to Bob Lyall, one rarely sees him flat racing, unless he comes to deputise for his father, who like Mr. John Harper and Lt.-Col. Fawcus, finds it increasingly difficult to get about owing to rheumatism. Bob Lyall's brother George died under tragic circumstances on Salisbury Plain during the war, and Frank, who rode Bloodstone in the National and would have won it but for bad luck on Ravenscliffe, trained for a short while when he gave up riding. He had Mitchells, winner of the New Century 'Chase at Hurst, but was subsequently disqualified owing to a partnership not having been registered.

Sid Menzies, nephew of the late George of Coxhoe, started riding over a country when he was only thirteen. I fancy Percy Woodland did the same. Sid was stable jockey for the Coxhoe establishment and, though nothing

really big came his way, he, season by season, picked up a lot of little races in the North on indifferent horses. He had a lot of bad falls and was wiser than many of his contemporaries who went on after their nerve and dash had gone. He trained and farmed for a while before the war near Stokesley, then took a farm in his home country near Sedgefield and for a while trained there. Now he hunts with the South Durham in the famous old Lambton country, breeds and shows a blood hunter or two, and acts as starter at Sedgefield and Wetherby Steeplechases, on both of which courses he rode so many winners.

Sid tells a lot of good stories, one of the most amusing of which is of a Cumbrian National Hunt fixture. There was a close finish between three of them at the end of a hurdle race, and when they had pulled up they looked for the numbers to see which had won. There were no numbers in the frame, but the judge was hanging half out of his box waving to them. They trotted up him and he then asked: "Which of you *thinks* he won?" The three jockeys all claimed to have done so, so the judge replied: "In that case I must give it to whom I think, though I wasn't sure about it." Sid married into the Trenholme family, who owned a 'chaser or two, and for long ran the Sedgefield meeting.

A grand steeplechase jockey was Alf Newey, though he had his days and seemed to vary. He was born at Halesowen, Worcestershire, February 12th, 1882, so was coming to his best thirty years ago. Like many other successful jockeys he springs from a family not even remotely connected with racing. He commenced his career with Rooney at Hednesford, and later joined forces with Tom Coulthwaite, for whose stable he rode many winners, including the aforementioned Eremon. When weight began to tell he commenced to train at Cheltenham, but in 1924 put on Mr. Howard's colours to ride Donegal for him at Cheltenham.

I was often amused at Coulthwaite telling Newey how to ride, or how he should have ridden, for Coulthwaite makes no secret of the fact that he has hardly ever been on a horse himself. It was the same with the late

William P'Anson of Malton. He rode a hack on the Wolds, it is true, but he cut a very poor figure in the saddle and was much happier when curling than when on horseback. The strange thing about it was that both these trainers were able to give jockeys very helpful hints as to the way they should ride their horses, and that it was often when jockeys failed to carry out their orders that they found they had made mistakes.

Alf Newey was one of those jockeys who *did* carry out the instructions given to him, though I have sometimes heard him say that if he had been allowed to ride certain horses "as he found them" he would have won races in which he was beaten. He certainly had brains and an eye like a hawk. One could see him taking in a race with a rapid glance and making a mental calculation as to how much the horses he feared had left in them.

The present Doncaster trainer, Arthur Reader, was just beginning to ride "jumping" thirty years ago, and very well he rode. I saw a good deal of him in the merry past and see him almost weekly now. We have for thirty years exchanged the same Yorkshire greeting, "Noo then, hoo is ta?" Arthur was born in 1885 at Beacon Farm, Holme-on-Spalding Moor, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, from which part of the country also came John Singleton, the first professional jockey of whom there is any record. Reader's forebears were long prominent breeders of Cleveland Bay and Yorkshire coach horses. I have been all my life almost as much interested in the former breed as in bloodstock, so that Arthur and I have something in common, as Yorkshiremen invariably have when they find anyone who can talk horse and hound.

Reared amongst horses and to farm work, Reader at the age of six began to ride in pony races, and when he was twelve he rode four winners in one afternoon for his uncle at one of those little country meetings at Scawnby in Lincs. The late George Drake (he raced as "G. W. Smith"), the big Leeds bookmaker, who at that time had horses with Adams at Hambleton, saw him and told him when he was old enough he would have to become a jockey. That set a seal on Arthur Reader's

future. Prior to going to Drake's trainer in 1903, however, he rode in an interesting match. He had a cousin who trained greyhounds for Drake. This cousin had a fast pony which a man, who had won a Sheffield Handicap, matched himself to beat on foot over a distance of 120 yards. The stakes were £5 aside and the pony which Arthur rode won the match with ease. Reader soon became too heavy for the flat and took to jumping, his first two rides being at Wetherby and both winners. One of them was John Dory, later owned by the author of this book.

He rode old True as Steel a winner on many occasions and many yet remember the cat he used to take to meetings with this gallant old horse so that he would settle in strange stables. At Haydock, when True as Steel was running, the locals used to meet the horse boxes at Newton-le-Willows to watch the unloading, and greeted Arthur with "Na lad, has tha fetched t'cat?" Reader served throughout the war, and on being demobilised returned to farming, but the call of the race-course and stable was too strong for him and he took stables at Doncaster and set up as a trainer.

The Taylor brothers (no relation to Joe, Davy and Fred, later of the flat) were prominent "jumping" jockeys when I commenced racing, the most successful of them being Harry, whose Turf career is just about as full of romance and stirring chapters as that of any jockey I ever knew. Although he never really got into the front rank, I think everyone who can recall his day will readily admit that he was just about as good as any of those against whom he rode. I propose here to give a brief survey of his life story as a remarkable narrative and as a type apart altogether from the individual, who is now only a name to most though he regularly turns up at Catterick, Wetherby, and Sedgefield fixtures. He has often told me how few there are he now knows.

Most of the old owners, trainers and jockeys of his day have gone; a new order and a new generation has arisen. Let me then epitomise Harry's life story, which contains the plot for several novels, and at the same time a vivid description of what life in training stables was thirty

years ago, as well as the struggles, disappointments, dangers and varied incidents in a steeplechase jockey's life. I am going to tell the story in his own words, as my old friend Harry Taylor (now living at Manchester), has told it to me :

Born at Manchester, January 8th, 1873, I commenced by riding a grey cob owned by a local greengrocer. I had to make my own leathers and stirrups out of orange-box ropes, but I thought myself "*it*" when on top. What finally decided me to be a jockey was my father taking me to Manchester races in 1884, and seeing Fred Archer handle a difficult horse at the starting post. Next year, when only twelve years old, I found myself on the way to Newmarket. How well I remember arriving at Newmarket station. A pony and trap met another embryo jockey and myself and soon had us at Mr. Tom Jennings', Lagrange House Yard. The men and boys were just finishing evening stables, each with his "tack" over his shoulders. They passed us singing and whistling, all apparently very happy, on their way to the saddle-room. What a place of mystery and wonderment that saddle-room was to me—bridles of all descriptions, sizes and makes, horse clothing, bandages, muzzles and other things used daily in a big training establishment. We were received into the saddle-room and had to stand the usual chaff about becoming Fred Archers, and then a pail of cold water was brought in so that we might be baptised into the great Turf army. I thought they were joking when they said that we must be re-christened, but soon found that we were "to go through it." We were both stripped to the waist, I was taken up bodily and plunged head first into the pail, one of the elder lads saying "Your stable name is 'Spider.'" This, I thought, very appropriate as I was slim, wiry and only weighed 3st. 12lb. My companion (C. Oxford) went through the same ordeal, "Punch" being the name given to him. We were never known by any other names during the time we were at Newmarket—and I was with Tom Jennings for seven years. There was often confusion when any relation came to see one of the boys at the stable, for no one knew the names they

bore when they left home, but if they had been warned to ask for "Pincher," "Tiny," "Giant," "Nipper," "Mouse," or whatever name had been given them, there was no difficulty.

On our first morning in stables we were roused up at 6.30 by the head lad and received a rude shock both to our hopes and pride by being told to go to the house where the cook "would find us something to do." I can assure you that she *did*. Whilst I was struggling with the first fire I had ever lighted, Punch was busy cleaning knives and forks at a table close by.

After breakfast at 8 a.m. we went back to the house, where I was given a brace of partridges to dress. When they were finished we both had to set to to wash up all the dirty pots, scrub pans and do other odd jobs. At night when we joined the others in the saddle-room, we found that we had to see which of us was the best fighter—Punch or me—for the amusement of those assembled there. So ended our first day as *jockeys*—how different to what we had both imagined!

We were kept at this sort of work for some time before we were even allowed to get on a horse. It had its compensations, for just after our arrival there was a spell of severe weather with frost and snow, so that the horses could not even go out on to the roads. The big yard at Lagrange House was littered with straw, and on this the horses walked round with an occasional trot at rare intervals. All the boys hated the straw bed, and from the wash-house window Punch and I watched the mad fresh horses circling for two and a half hours.

After I'd had five months as "copperhole Jack," I was brought out to ride a French horse named Xaintrailles, which ran in the 1885 Derby.

When I was promoted to "do" a horse myself and to ride out I was told by the other boys that I could not possibly ride in a gallop, or any fast work without a pair of cloth-topped spurs and a left-handed whip. I was informed that every apprentice had to have these articles in his own possession, and that I'd better go down to a saddlers' and get them, together with a "soft bit." The latter, it was explained, I had to use if I was to ride

a horse which was a hard puller, or a mad, runaway brute, as it was quite easy to hold any horse in such a bit.

All this was told to me with such seriousness that I was quite impressed and believed it all. I should have gone to the saddler and shown myself a greenhorn had it not been for one of the oldest stablemen at Lagrange House. Poor old Bob Cliffe! He was my guardian angel and put me wise. After I had been at Newmarket for some time a night school was started for stableboys only. Attendance was optional, but that great sportsman, the late Sir John Astley ("The Mate"), gave two silver watches for the boys who made the best attendance. Tom Jennings' boys won both, one of them coming to me. After this I went to a really good night school known as Glenwood College, in High Street, close to the old Cambridgeshire winning post. Frank Rickaby and Otto Madden were amongst my class mates.

In the early spring of 1886 I was put up to ride in a trial. My mount was a little mare called Bertha and the question was asked over five furlongs on the race-course side of the town. I got up to beat that great artist Fred Webb by a neck. What a thrill that gallop gave me! I thought myself a finished jockey at once, especially as Fred Webb said I had ridden him right out of it. I believed it then, but it was possibly only to encourage a young beginner. Bertha won a few days later at Brighton. I was then only thirteen, and after this rode in gallops almost daily—and how those half-speed five furlongs bring a novice on. Mr. Jennings would send four or five of us on two-year-olds down to the five furlong post either on the Lime-kilns, or the race-course side, and would say: "Let them stride along to me." The head lad would take us along and set us on our journey and we learned to be sloppy. We didn't try to hold our horses in, but let them stride along as instructed, to Mr. Jennings. If he thought any of us were trying to race, up would go his little ash stick (he always carried this), as a warning to steady up. On the other hand, if we were not going fast enough he would wave the stick as a signal to come on—and we *did*! We all tried to hoodwink the trainer that our individual mount was

going better than it really was. We would make out that our horse was pulling double whilst we sat like a statue with one leg straight out and the other heel urging on our mount. This we called "blind heeling." Our object was to get the animal we were riding away to a meeting. That meant *us* getting away for a day or two as well, with the possible chance of a winner. But I don't think our "blind heeling" ever deceived Mr. Jennings!

My first outing to a race meeting was Northampton—and what a picnic I thought it to break the monotony of months at Newmarket—horses and gallops, gallops and horses! As soon as we got our horses boxed we were given 2s. 6d. each for expenses. Sometimes we were put on board wages and had 5s. a day allowed. It wouldn't be much use to-day!

In the Spring of 1887 I was told by Mr. Jennings to find breeches and boots to fit me. That meant my first ride in public! It was on a little mare, Valentine. Just imagine my feelings at having my mare taken up to the course by another lad whilst I walked up a full blown jockey! Old Jim Goater, who rode for Mr. Jennings at that time, helped me to get into the breeches, boots and colours—white, green sash, red cap. Mr. Jennings threw me into the saddle and led me out saying "Jump off in front and remain there until you've passed the winning post," adding, on no account must I get left—a crime in those days!

I couldn't obey instructions, and when I returned Mr. Jennings said, "Didn't I tell you to jump off in front and stay there?" I tried to explain that Valentine could never go with them from the start, but of course he knew this better than I did, though I thought then he meant all he said. I always remember the kindness of Lord Marcus Beresford who acted as Starter on that occasion. Barrett was trying to get "a flier" and the Starter said, "*Will* you come back, Barrett, I want to get this boy away as well as *you*." My next mount was also at Newmarket on a mare called Iceni. Although only carrying 5 st. 7 lb. she was unplaced and proved no use for racing.

About this time we took over all the horses owned by Prince Soltykoff; amongst them Sheen, winner of the Ascot Derby, Cesarewitch (carrying 9 st. 2 lb.), and many other races. Another was Gold, which I saw beat that great horse Ayrshire at Newmarket. Mephisto, Love-in-Idleness and Devilshoof were amongst others the Prince sent.

I was now doing a mare called Norah's Darling, out of the same dam as Sheen, but it turned out she could do nothing but eat, and get me into endless trouble. I had more ash plant over her than was good for my temper. She was a beautiful ebony black and shone like silk when finished off. But her box number was thirteen! Having such a fine coat, when the sun shone on her back from behind it made her look as though she had not been touched and was full of dust. I used to pray the sun would not be shining when Mr. Jennings came round for his evening inspection, for I knew if it was I was in for the ash-plant no matter how hard I worked.

We were not allowed to rug up and bed down till he had seen each animal, and had felt their legs and tendons. Sometimes he was early, sometimes late, and many were the tedious waits we had. All the time those wisps of hay were flogging away at the horses, making a sound like so many drums going. We had wireless even in those days, for as soon as the trainer lifted the garden-gate latch the boy in box No. 1 (opposite the gate) tapped with his currycomb on the wall of his box, quite naturally as though he was knocking out the dust. No. 2 repeated the signal and so it passed right round the stable-yard. If Mr. Jennings was heard to be humming—a habit he had—we knew there was trouble for someone. When he got to my box—the unlucky No. 13!—should the sun be shining as he inspected my mare, I was for it. It often happened that it streamed right through the stable window and open door on to Norah's back. No matter how hard I had been strapping down came the stick with the complaint, "You've never had a brush on her this night—get a start and dress her over!" That hurt me more than the stick for all the

other boys bedded down and left. Then there was the feeling of injustice.

After another hour's strapping the head lad would come round and tell me to rug up. I got so many thrashings over that mare that I became quite indifferent, thinking that if I was abused for doing my best, it would be all the same *not* doing it. On those nights when the sun was not shining "the old man" (as we called Mr. Jennings) would feel her ribs, look her over, stand back and say: "She looks beautiful to-night, you can work at her when you like!"

I was very glad when I got a change of horses, for Norah couldn't win a race and an apprentice, if compelled to polish bones for a living, likes to polish winning bones.

My visit to Ascot in 1888, when Shillelagh won the Royal Hunt Cup, had an unfortunate bearing on my career as an apprentice jockey. We had a number of horses running, most of them owned by Prince Soltykoff, amongst them being Tenebreuse (a French mare), Blondel, Gold, Sheen, Devilshoof, Pantomime and Love-in-Idleness. Tenebreuse, winner of the Cesarewitch that year, ran in the Gold Vase and Gold Cup, Sheen won the Ascot Derby (and also won a Cesarewitch) whilst Gold captured the Thirty-First Biennial Stakes.

We were out at exercise early and after breakfast were free till time to go to the course. The usual crowd was hanging round the stables. There are more of the flotsam and jetsam of the Turf to be found near Epsom and Ascot stables than any other, most of them hoping to get a tip, either by word of mouth or from the pocket. A well-spoken and well-dressed man came up to me, and the following dialogue ensued:

He: "What do you fancy for the Hunt Cup?"

Me: "I haven't any idea what'll win it. We have a mare Luciana running in it, but she hasn't an earthly chance. . . . But I can tell you one of ours that *will* win ten minutes."

I suppose I thought I appeared an important person in his eyes telling him this, and he certainly pricked his ears up and appeared interested.

"I should be very glad if you *will*," he replied.

"Then back Gold for the Thirty-first Biennial," I replied, adding, "and be sure you don't miss Sheen for the Ascot Derby on Wednesday."

The gentleman thanked me and I thought no more about the matter. Both horses won, I didn't know who the man I had tipped the winners to was, I had never seen him before and I never saw him again, but he was the unconscious cause of my undoing. I had a royal time at Ascot—a delightful change after Newmarket, for which we set out on the Saturday. A few of us travelled home in the same horsebox, playing "All Fours" during the journey.

On the Tuesday of the following week I was just putting my horse's bridle on to go out to ride exercise, when up went the study window at Lagrange House, and the old familiar shrill whistle sounded. This was a signal that the head lad was wanted by Mr. Jennings. The call was answered and to my box came the head lad with the message that "Spider" (that was me), was wanted by "the old man." For the life of me I could not think why Mr. Jennings wanted an interview with *me*, but I was soon to find out. I went across to the house, knocked at the study door, went in and was at once put on the alert. Mr. Jennings knew I was a Manchester boy and began:

"What friends have you who live at Ealing?"

The mention of Ealing told me at once that something was wrong and I have never forgotten the name. Like lightning I answered, "An uncle, sir!"

"I suppose you'll have an aunt there as well?" retorted Mr. Jennings, in a cold unbelieving voice and looking right through me.

"Oh, yes," said I, "of course I have an aunt there too."

"Just so," remarked the old man, "I thought you would. Well, here is a letter from your aunt and uncle at Ealing."

"Thank you, sir," said I taking the letter and thinking how well I had got out of it, though quite mystified who the letter could be from. I turned to the door and was about to go out when I heard the cold voice say:

"Come back here! I have not finished yet. Open that letter from your uncle and aunt, I'd like to know how they are. I'm very interested in your relations at Ealing."

I then knew I was for it. I couldn't open the letter. I knew I had lied and was terrified.

"You stubborn brute," said Mr. J. (with many other strong words), "if *you* won't open the letter I *will*, give it to me!"

I did so, it was opened in a second, and out came several post office orders. To this day I don't know the amount, or what the accompanying letter contained, but it was obviously from the man I had so foolishly entered into conversation with at Ascot. That was my first and last effort as a tipster. Of course, if he had wished, Mr. Jennings could have forthwith cancelled my indentures which contained a clause regarding apprentices divulging stable information. I had done so out of vanity, I had not given the man my address, I never expected a letter from him and he little thought the trouble he got me into, though he would think it strange he never got a reply. Possibly he *did*, for I shouldn't wonder if Mr. Jennings wrote him a piece of his mind for quizzing young apprentices about their master's secrets.

I was a nice lightweight, had become useful for riding gallops and trials and so was not sent home in disgrace, but I did not ride a gallop for months. Any horse on the walking list—and there are always a few in a big stable like we had—and "Spider" got them. That was my punishment—walking round and round the Severals looking at Jimmy Ryan's clock and awaiting the string returning from the Lime-kilns. I was for months like an outcast just when I should have been having experience in public. I had blotted my copy-book and was not given another chance. When my father asked Mr. Jennings how I was getting on he never gave me away but replied enigmatically, "Your boy will never make a parson," which didn't convey much to father.

When my apprenticeship was at an end I left Mr. Tom Jennings and returned to Manchester for a holiday. As my father at that time had the Jolly Angler Inn at

Hulme, I heard a lot of racing gossip which whetted my appetite, though I had previously decided I would never go into racing stables again. Up to that time I had never seen a Grand National so determined to go, little thinking then that I should become a steeplechase jockey and ride over Aintree myself. I remember taking up my stand at Valentine's Brook and wondering however horses could jump such obstacles. At Valentine's Brook, Mr. E. Woodland's Nap, ridden by Mr. H. Woodland, came down and I ran out on to the course, caught the grey, jumped on to his back and was about to set him going again, when a policeman pulled me down, saying "Do you want to kill yourself, young man?" No doubt he thought he was doing me a good turn; perhaps he was, for I had never up till then ridden over a fence, so had a pretty good conceit of myself.

Well, I saw Father O'Flynn win that National, ridden by the late Capt. E. "Roddy" Owen, and from that hour I decided that riding over fences was the game for me.

Just before this National a Mr. Sidebottom of Rochdale, one of a wealthy cotton spinning family, was getting together a little stable of jumpers at Glazebrook, between Manchester and Haydock Park. He engaged me and we had just got a few gallops into shape, when a "warning off" notice came from Mr. Sidebottom senior, and the little establishment was dissolved immediately.

Later I went to Croxdale Hall, near Durham, then the residence of the late Captain J. E. Rogerson, M.F.H. (later of Mount Oswald, Durham). That was my real start as a National Hunt jockey. I was for many years with Mr. Rogerson, and very happy years they were, for it would have been impossible to have found a better or more considerate master.

The first two horses of his which I came in contact with were Purseproud, a bay gelding by Pursebearer, the other a big brown gelding by Chester. Pursebearer had been trained by William P'Anson at Malton, and was thought to be almost a good thing for the Derby in Shotover's year, whilst I believe Purseproud was backed for the National but broke down. I rode him

and other horses schooling on Shincliffe race-course, owned by Mr. Rogerson, and very popular with the Durham hunting folk and miners till the War years, when it dropped out of the list.

My first ride in public was at another little north country meeting which, like Shincliffe, Scarborough, Picton, Rotherham and several others, is now no more. It was at Malton, a fixture for which Mr. William I'Anson did so much. The course was on his property but for some reason the late Mr. Charles Perkins, for whom he trained so many winners, got him to discontinue the fixture. I think he wanted the course for gallops. Anyhow, Malton races came to an end a few years after my first ride there. It was on Purseproud I first rode a steeplechase. He was a very hard puller, but a wonderful lepper, and I don't think he was ever known to refuse or fall in a race, though he would not jump at home, and was rarely ever asked to go over a fence except in his races.

At Sedgefield the same season I rode a mare called Lady Pauline, which came down with me and knocked me out for a bit. On returning to Durham that night I went into a barber's shop, and when the man put the cloth round me he stared very hard, then dropped his tools in astonishment, and said: "They told me you were a corpse—that you'd been killed at Sedgefield to-day!" Far from being a corpse, I rode my first winner under National Hunt Rules the following day at Sedgefield. My mount was a mare called Misfortune, and the race was the very first Londonderry Challenge Cup, two miles. Funnily enough Misfortune was one of Lord Londonderry's cast offs, and came and won his lordship's Challenge Cup.

At the subsequent Catterick meeting I again rode Lady Pauline with rather dramatic results. On the first day there were only two runners in her race, Mr. Murray Thriepland riding his own useful horse Frontier. We both jogged along together until two fences from home. My mare—always a handful and a half—was pulling my arms out, so I let her stride along, as she had a great burst of speed, to the last fence, or what should have

been the last fence. In those days, however, we finished over a hurdle, and as soon as Lady Pauline saw the hurdle she stuck her toes into the ground and whipped round, upsetting a policeman on duty. All she had to do was to have cantered on and won, but in the meantime Frontier came up and passed the post first. He had jumped the water, however, instead of the hurdle, and seeing this I did all in my power to squeeze my mare over the hurdle without avail. Being told of his mistake Mr. Thriepland cantered back, jumped the hurdle with my mare accompanying him now that she had a lead. But she only popped over and Frontier won easily.

Everyone who knew anything about horses could see that the fiasco was one of those annoying things which are unavoidable in racing and hunting, but next day when Lady Pauline came out again and beat a field of eight, including a useful horse called Nimrod, and won in a canter, there was something akin to a riot in the cheap part of the course. On this occasion I got behind the other horses at the hurdle, and she never saw it till she was up to it, so won in a canter.

Directly I turned in for the weighing-room I was met with derisive boos and threats. Eventually some of those who were convinced that the incident on the previous day had been a planned ramp, came for me and the mare, and things looked very ugly. It was only with assistance that I got the saddle and weight-cloths off with the angry, jeering, booing crowd surging round me. The last thing I remember seeing was the mare galloping about loose in the paddock and a big fist just missing my face. Mr. Rogerson saw the fist coming and got one in straight home from the shoulder at its owner before the fist arrived where it was intended. The crowd was at boiling point, but Mr. Rogerson was pretty useful with his fists in those days and stood his ground when I disappeared to the scale. I weighed in all right, but daren't go out into the paddock as the police said I should be murdered if I showed my face. Before the finish of racing I was escorted to the station by a couple of bobbies.

They were roughish days those, and crowds were not

so well-behaved, or so easily restrained as they are to-day.

I soon began to get my share of riding and winners outside my own stable, and did well in 1895-6. At Hamilton Park, in April, 1895, I was unlucky not to ride four winners on two horses on the old course. These were trained at Malton by Mr. W. Binnie, who was one of the most delightful men to ride for, as there were no grumbles when one was fairly beaten. Being a practical man, born to the racing and training business, he could see for himself when there was no fault attached to the jockey, but with others there are often nothing but grumbles when their horses are beaten.

The two 'chasers he took to Hamilton Park were Horton and Greengage. On the former I very easily won the Maiden Hurdle, and should have won on Greengage if she had not all but come down at the last fence. As it was I was only just beaten. I won the Glasgow 'Chase easily on Horton, and the Cadzow 'Chase equally easily on Greengage.

Poor Fred Finlay was as delighted as Mr. Binnie, and came to me after the second race to say what good days with hounds he had been having on Horton. Poor Fred died at Malton at the end of 1909. He started to ride in public in 1883 for Lund's stable,¹ and two years before the Hamilton Park incidents of which I have been writing, he finished fifth in the list of winning flat race jockeys with exactly 100 wins out of 495 mounts. In 1893 he had ridden the first four winners at the York Spring meeting, so that beat my performance. That year too, he won the Northumberland Plate on Lord Hastings' Seaton Delaval and the Ayrshire Handicap on Progression, whilst in 1895, the year of which I am speaking, he had ridden the winner of the Northumberland Plate again, The Docker—and had won the Chester Cup on Captain Machell's Kilsallaghan.

My ambition was to ride in the National, as it had been

¹ Charles Lund, born Malton, 1846, apprenticed to John Scott, White-wall, Malton, commenced to train at Malton 1872. Succeeded Robert Peck at Grove House, Malton. Later bought Spring Cottage there, and died May, 1905. His son Tom succeeded him but gave up training some years ago to go in for farming.

ever since the memorable day when I saw my first steeplechase at Liverpool. My chance to ride over Liverpool fences came in 1896. At this time we had a useful little mare, Red Cross, a five-year-old by Ascetic—Ruby, on which I had won two 'chases—the only two races in which she had run. Mr. Rogerson sent her to run in the Stanley Five-Year-Old Steeple, so I had a walk round the course before racing and thought the fences almost impossible for such a little 'un.

I watched The Soarer (Mr. Campbell) win the National, Father O'Flynn second, and then came my first Liverpool ride. There were only five runners in my race, Gauntlet, ridden by Arthur Nightingall, being favourite at 5 to 4 on, Red Cross 6 to 1. We had not gone far before I heard the familiar crash telling us that something had gone west. I was lying at Nightingall's quarters, thinking I could not follow a better man, and we went in company to Beecher's and Valentine's, where—crash! again. Something else had "come it." My little mare was taking her fences beautifully and there were now only three of us left. The second time at either Beecher's or Valentine's the favourite was down. To make the story short I won my first race over Liverpool by three lengths. Never before or after, did I have a sweeter ride.

I have a very different story regarding the Scottish Grand National just afterwards. Red Cross started favourite but was baulked by a horse wanting to refuse coming right across her, and bringing her down. Only those who have met the ground from a horse going racing pace know what it means. I got an awful thud, and on getting on my feet again started off as hard as I could run, as I thought, towards the paddock. As a matter of fact I was going in the opposite direction, and when someone who had seen the fall hurried after me I said: "I must be back, I am riding in the next!" "Well" replied he, "at the moment you look as though you were going *swimming*, for you're making for the sea as fast as you can." This explains why jockeys after a fall often turn round in circles, and don't know where they are, or whether they're really hurt or only dazed.

I had my first ride in the Grand National in 1897 on Mr. Rogerson's mare Red Cross, on which I had won over Liverpool fences the previous year. She had jumped so faultlessly when winning that we thought she had just an outside chance in the National, in which she ran in Count Zech's name and the starting price was 100 to 1. There were 28 runners that year, and as Red Cross only had a light weight I naturally wanted to be going on with the first division so as to have no interference at the initial fence. Over that one is on the first rung of the ladder to success, and I am sure that a lot of horses come undone at that obstacle because they are "unsighted," never really seeing it.

I got a good position and managed to keep it, which is not always possible in view of horses coming across you, bumping, others possibly refusing and so on—all very trying to those on good jumpers. Over Becher's and Valentine's I was right there and holding my own, and, when past the stands and over the water, I began to fancy my chance, my mare never having put a foot wrong. Away out into the country she was pulling double. Then came my downfall! Either at Becher's, or the plain fence before it, a horse of Joe Cannon's—Barcalwhay—ridden by Charlie Hogan, came down an awful crumpler just in front of me. I saw what was coming when I was in the air, and right on top of Barcalwhay landed Red Cross. Down we came as well and so ended my first Grand National!

Once, owing to going to sleep in the train, I arrived late at Doncaster races. The first one I met in the weighing-room was Albert Banner with the colours on. He had just weighed out to ride my mount Whiteboy II. "I'm riding yours, Harry," he said. "Right, Albert," I replied, and told him to watch out as Whiteboy had given me an awful ride at Rotherham two days before. He had tried to climb the boards into the Sheffield football ground, and had behaved like a demon. Rotherham meeting has long been dead, but I shall never forget it.

Albert Banner was a good jockey and one of the nicest fellows in the world, but luck always seemed to be

against him. It was so on this occasion. I went to watch the race from the stand, and just when they were coming to the water away went Whiteboy over the rails and head over heels. When he got up, leaving poor Banner on the ground, he made a bee-line for the paddock-gate. Someone tried to stop him, he swerved and charged the big iron rails, never attempting to jump them. Through the rails he went as though they were match-stalks (merely leaving the top bar standing), and into the paddock. Such horses never seem to hurt themselves and the only damage he had done was to knock one eyepiece off his blinkers. It was otherwise with Albert Banner, who was brought in badly smashed up. That would have been my lot if I hadn't gone to sleep in the train!

Thinking Whiteboy would go better for the man who did him, Mr. Bourke decided to run the horse again at Southwell, with "Midge" Green as jockey. A good horseman too, was Midge. He is now training at Stapleton Park, outside Pontefract, where three or four Leger winners were stabled in quick succession in the days of the Hon. Mr. Petre. Green in 1921 had the distinction of winning the St Leger with Polemarch which he took over with other horses from Capt. Dewhurst, with whom he had been head man.

Born at Leeds, and apprenticed with old Tom Green, "Midge" was with Mr. Bourke at Kirkbank, at the time of which I write, and he will recall the Southwell ride he had on Whiteboy, and how his mount tried to get out after passing the stands but did not know of a big stream which runs by the side of this course. He found it, however, but I can't recollect whether his jockey went in too. Anyhow that exhibition was sufficient for Mr. Bourke, who had Whiteboy put up for sale and I bought him for a few pounds. So soon as I had a spare day at home I put some harness on him and of this he took no notice, but when I fixed a hurdle for him to pull he simply stood and kicked and wouldn't budge. We fought it out, and when he found he was beaten he lay down and nothing would induce him to get on to his legs. So I left him just as he was for fully

two hours, and when I returned he was mighty glad to see me and ready enough to get up. He had got himself so entangled with ropes and reins that he couldn't rise. By the end of a week he had taken a luggage cart and some sacks of corn through to Seaton Carew without ever turning his head and made a lovely harness horse. I afterwards sold Whiteboy to Mr. Rogerson who had him out with hounds. He was a beautiful horse to ride and seemed to glide over his fences. A child could have ridden him but for his dislike of open ditches. He used to go for these with ears pricked as much as to say: "I'll show you how open ditches *should* be jumped," and then he would bolt. He had won at least 14 races for Mr. Bourke and Mr. Rogerson decided to give him another chance at Catterick to see if he'd forgotten his bolting propensities. My brother Alfred¹ rode him and was winning a street when coming to the second last fence; then away he went into the blue.

Speaking of "kinks" in horses reminds me of some other equine peculiarities of which those who are so ready to criticise owners, trainers and jockeys know nothing. The late Mr. R. J. Bourke,² the owner of Whiteboy, had another 'chaser called Bloomer—well up to 16 st. with hounds. When I went to ride him at a school at Barton I thought before I mounted, "here's a horse will never win races," but I altered my opinion before I had finished my first ride on him. I rode him the first time he ran in public. It was at Shincliffe, where he simply smothered the rest of the field. He won equally easily at Hexham, and a fortnight later at Rotherham. Later Albert Banner won a lot of races on him, including the Sefton at Liverpool and the Welsh Grand National.

Another useful horse I won many races on was Balcary, by Strathmore—St. Bridget, owned by that first-rate Cumbrian sportsman, the late Mr. J. H. Jefferson who was a real all-rounder—Master of Foxhounds, of Otter Hounds, a great coursing enthusiast, a good horseman, shot and angler.

¹ Now a jockeys' valet.

² Died at Richmond, Yorkshire, October 1933, aged 79.

Continuing these memories of equine peculiarities I remember on one occasion after riding Red Cross a school at Malton, Mr. Binnie put me up on Wild Man from Borneo to ride him over a few fences. He had won the Grand National the previous year (1895), and had been third to Why Not in 1894, ridden on both occasions by Mr. Joe Widger. At Malton on this particular morning he would do nothing but refuse to my own and Mr. John Widger's (his owner's) surprise. The explanation was that the fences were beneath his notice and he wanted the excitement of the race-course, and company to go along with him.

That great horseman Mr. Charlie Cunningham used to tell a story of driving a couple of 'chasers up to Kelso race-course in his luncheon cart and afterwards running them both and riding them both winners. I once had a similar experience at Shincliffe. We had a little brown mare called Molly, who was a bundle of nerves. She was in a blue funk when she knew—as race-horses *do* know—she had to run. Perspiration would stream off her, she would shake like a leaf and walk round and round a strange box like a caged lion. I persuaded Mr. Rogerson to put her into harness and for months she pulled his brougham about the city of Durham. Then she was entered for a steeplechase at Shincliffe. Mr. Rogerson and a few friends got into the brougham, she took them to the course and stood as quiet as a sheep in the shafts till I had weighed out. Then she was saddled and ran very game, indeed I was only just beaten on her.

About this time we had three very useful horses in our stable—Harvest Home, Wee Busbie and Buffalo Bill, each of which won Mr. Rogerson many races, the latter being very unlucky to be beaten in the Grand National of 1910.

Jockeys as well as music hall artistes sometimes "get the bird." It was once my fate to do so at Haydock Park. I had just ridden a winner for the Duke of Westminster at Southwell on The Gatherer, which nearly came down at the last fence and took a lot of gathering together again. I was complimented on the way I had ridden, and was engaged to ride another of the Duke's horses

(St. Benet) at Haydock. I had ridden him before—a big, useful and good looking 'chaser. At Haydock there were only three runners and I was given orders to ride a waiting race. If the others cantered I was to canter and let them give me a lead over the fences. My fellow could have carried the other two but the race was run exactly as the Duke's connections wished. We only put on steam two fences from home and then came like Hades, locked together till we passed the post. Not one of the three of us knew what had till the numbers went up. The judge's decision was that I was beaten a short head, the other dead-heating with me for second place.

When I came into the paddock I was met with a volley of abuse and sarcasm—"I say, let your father ride the next time"; "Are your arms tired?" "What bank do you deal with?" and accompanying "boos" and hoots. Yet I had ridden to orders, and those really interested did not blame me in the least. It's marvellous how well you ride when you *win* races, and what a bad jockey you are when you just fail to get up on favourites—at least in the opinion of irresponsible Toms, Dicks and Harrys who have never been on a horse in their lives, and neither know your orders, or are able to judge the incidents and accidents which occur during a race.

About 1896 I became very friendly with Mr. T. Barrasford, of musichall fame, and have always considered him one of the most interesting personalities and most far-seeing men I ever met. If I had followed his advice I should have been a wealthy man to-day. On one occasion I spent a few days with him at Newcastle just after he had bought an off-licensed house in Shieldfields. When I arrived I found him at the top of a ladder painting his name in big gold letters—and beautifully done it was too! During that visit he begged me to join him in buying some licensed property, knowing that I had a bit of money by me at the time, but I hadn't the confidence in him then that I had later. He often went to the north-country meetings with me, gambled heavily, and was often broke, but a more honest man never broke bread.

He sold his off-licensed premises at a big profit to brewers within twelve months, and then took the Mill

Dam Hotel at South Shields. There was a small theatre in connection with this property, and he felt very sore that a licence was refused him for this. I stayed at the Mill Dam with him when he had Frank Craig ("The Coffee House Cooler"), a black boxer, in training to fight. The black won easily. In due course the Mill Dam was sold at a considerable profit to the brewers and he bought and sold many licensed houses after this. Then he went in for music halls, and again begged me to join him. He bought the Tivoli at Leeds and started two shows a night, which went on wheels. He then opened out similar places all over—Manchester, Birmingham, London, and, I fancy, had the Coliseum at Ostend. He was a great showman and saw far ahead.

He bought a few good horses—Little Grafton, Cardonald, Helium, amongst them, the last-named giving me many winning rides. It was on him I had my first ride at Gatwick, and I still recall how kind Tom Fitton¹ was in showing me round the course before racing. Helium ran very well with top weight up in the Tantivy 'Chase, and, at the last fence, looked like beating a big field. Mr. Barrasford told me to go through to Doncaster to ride him there. On the day of the race he said, "He hasn't an earthly chance, but we'll give him a run." In view of his Gatwick running I couldn't understand this. I think he must have told everyone who asked him that the horse had no chance, for I was informed he was being knocked about in the betting. Whilst waiting in the paddock for the order to "get mounted," that great border sportsman and gentleman jockey, Mr. Charles Cunningham,² who was one of the Stewards at the meeting, came up and said: "You'll win it, won't you, Taylor?" He was feeling my pulse and I replied: "I think I will, Mr. Cunningham."

A few minutes later he came back and said, "Your horse is being dealt with in the ring in a way I don't like. I suppose you are doing your best?" He was feeling my pulse again, and I answered that I thought that it was a good thing for me and that I *always* did my best.

¹ Born Doncaster, 1861. Now training at Lewes.

² Died October 20th, 1906.

"I know you do, Taylor," retorted the Steward . . . "but——" and then the order came "jockeys up," and Mr. Barrasford came to give me a leg up. I told him what had passed between myself and the Steward, and he said :

"You know more about the horse than I do, let him stride along." I carried out those orders to the letter. By the time I had got to that old landmark, the Rifle Butts, I was a fence in front. He took them all off their legs, was never headed, and won at 6 to 1. After the race Mr. Cunningham came up and said, "I think you did your best, Taylor!"

Just before this I spent a good deal of time with Mr. Tom Barrasford's brother, G. A. Barrasford (now Major) at Marsden Hall, a stone's-throw from Marsden Rock. He had just started a small stable there but had no one about him who knew anything about racing, and frankly admitted that he knew nothing himself. I acted in the capacity of adviser, and spent some very happy times at the Hall. He wasn't long before he tired of racing and went in for greyhounds, taking a place at Corbridge, where he built kennels and did very well in the coursing world.

It is interesting to recall that at Marsden Hall there was a very nice little boy as apprentice called Joe Lawson. I taught him all I knew with regard to riding a gallop, dressing a horse over, and general stable work. We always called him "Little Joe," and I always found him willing to learn. He didn't "know it all," like so many boys. I got him ready for the first race in which he ever rode—Punchinello in the Scurry Welter Handicap at Gosforth Park in 1897. After leaving Mr. Barrasford I didn't see him for years, and we again met at Gosforth Park. He was "Little Joe" no longer, and told me he had long been travelling head man for Alec Taylor. Now he is one of the most successful trainers in the country. He was born at Boldon Gint, near Marsden in the county of Durham, in 1881. He soon became too heavy to ride, and on Mr. Rogerson's recommendation went to Alec Taylor, whom he succeeded.

Reverting to Mr. Tom Barrasford, he and Eugene

Stratton were at one time in Moore's Minstrel Troupe. I remember him one night bringing Stratton (who was appearing at Sunderland) to Marsden for the night. He went over a song he had not at that time sung in public and asked how he thought it would go. Tom B. replied: "Don't sing it, Eugene, there's nothing in it."

"I know it seems tame without music or make-up, but I'm going to sing it," replied Stratton.

He *did*, and it went like hot cakes. I am not quite sure whether it was "Little Dolly Daydream," or "Go to Sleep my Little Piccaninny," but it was one of the two, and I think the latter.

The last time I saw Mr. Barrasford he was living at Brighton and we met at King's Cross. I was returning from Sandown Park, and we were both bound for Manchester. On arrival there we dined together, and then he took me round the various music halls with which he was connected. I showed him, before we parted for the last time, the gold repeater watch I was wearing—a present from himself for riding Helium some years before in the Club Steeplechase at Manchester. Not long afterwards he died, leaving nearly £70,000.

I have mentioned Mr. Adam Scott, that good Northumbrian sportsman who was such a tower of strength to the northern meetings, being killed by a fall at Kelso. Let me quote another Kelso memory and fatality.

I was once riding a horse called Stephano in a hurdle race at this Border meeting and Mick Williams, a friend of mine, was on one of Johnny McGuigan's named Demon. Mine was a 5 to 4 on chance, and we raced to the last hurdle together. Here Demon came down a fearful purler and I was left to canter in and win. Mick was brought back on the ambulance badly hurt. Later on he told me he had fully made up his mind never to ride again at Kelso as his luck was always dead out there. "If ever I am on anything which is fancied there I always do the wrong thing, or something happens—it is my unlucky meeting, and I'll never take a mount there again." For years he stuck to his word and never turned up at Kelso. Then one meeting there clashed with a number of others and it was difficult to get jockeys.

The late Mr. C. W. Henderson, owner of the Hexham course, wired to McGuigan and asked if Williams would ride one of his horses at Kelso. Mick demurred, said Fate was against him at Kelso, that he'd taken an oath never to ride there again, and that he'd much rather not go, even to oblige Mr. Henderson.

However he went to take what was to be his last ride. Bad luck pursued him and he was killed by a fall. Both Mr. Henderson and McGuigan were terribly upset.

There are a number of equine "slaves" which seemed to go on racing year by year. One of these was the very popular and honest Ravenscliffe, trained, and later owned, by that great sportsman Mr. R. I. Robson. At one period Ravenscliffe was the property of the late Mr. Robert Hannam, one of the most open-handed men I ever knew. He was the son of a West Riding farmer, and he and his brother Charlie both took to racing, the latter being one of the best known professional backers of this generation. "Bob" became a bookmaker and died at Bradford at the age of sixty-nine in January, 1928. I fancy I was the first to ride Ravenscliffe over fences in public, and what's more I won on him then. He was afterward successful in many good steeplechases, and Mr. Robson always considers he was very unlucky to be beaten in the 1907 Grand National, won by Eremon. Frank Lyall rode Ravenscliffe and, when going great guns, lost a stirrup iron two fences from home and was badly bumped. As it was he finished bang up fourth.

It was a peculiar coincidence that I should ride Ravenscliffe in his last race as well as his first. Afterwards he was pensioned off by Mr. Robson, who had a tremendous affection for the old horses, as he had for all the animals about his beautiful place, Branton Court, Farnham, near Knaresborough. Mr. Robson occasionally hunted him both before and after he had finished his racing career, and one summer, when a pensioner, sent him to a cousin's farm near Boroughbridge to run out with some more horses in a good pasture. One day the York and Ainsty passed by on an early cubbing expedition and, feeling it was time he was going home, Ravenscliffe jumped out of the field, took two young horses with

him, and, though he had only been along the road once, and had toll and railway gates to get through, made the twelve miles journey successfully, and whinnied under his master's bedroom window to announce his arrival.

It was always a pleasure to ride for Mr. Robson, as he had been through the mill himself and so knew and understood that neither jockeys nor horses can do impossibilities.

I believe that I was the first jockey in England to ride a doped horse over fences at a race meeting. The animal was Sporrán, and he was doped by that well-known veterinary surgeon, the late Mr. J. G. Deans of Bishop Auckland.¹ Of course doping was not illegal in those days any more than it was when the Hon. George Lambton experimented with "dope" on flat racers some years later.

I had taken Sporrán to run at Cartmel on Whit-Monday, and, on the Sunday morning sent our lot on to the sands at Grange to do "work." When I arrived I found Sporrán so lame that I could not even trot him, let alone give him the steady gallop I had intended. I got a wire off to Mr. Rogerson informing him that it would be impossible for Sporrán to run. In due course a reply came: "Am sending Deans, have horse ready to run." So, on the Monday morning Sporrán walked over from Grange to Cartmel, quite the lamest horse I ever saw sent to a race-course to run. I weighed out in Mr. Rogerson's colours to ride him, and just as I was about to mount Mr. Deans came along, gave my horse a dope with a hyperdermic syringe in the shoulder. Now ordinarily Sporrán was a quiet and docile horse, but when I was thrown into the saddle he pricked his ears, then got on to his toes, and, when we were through the paddock gate, all sign of lameness was gone. A horse called Lord Percy, ridden by Fred Hassall, was favourite, his friend Mr. Massey Harper riding something else in

¹ Capt Deans was born at Hawick, and was a well-known Turfite. He died October 4th, 1930, at Windlestone, near Bishop Auckland. He wrote in 1930 (see p 47, *Dopes*, by Nathaniel Gubbins): "As the first veterinary surgeon in England to attempt the hypodermic injection of a stimulant into a racehorse before running, I confidently assert that it is possible to treat a horse by this method, not once but many times, without any detrimental effect, either immediately or in future"

the race to give as much help as he could to Fred and Lord Percy. I can assure you these two knew a thing or two ; indeed, what they didn't know about the game was useless to others. However, Cartmel course is three times round for two miles, and by the time the flag dropped my mount was a maniac. Coming round the stand turn the first time the others had me wedged in on the rails with one leg over them. I fully expected going over every minute, or bringing my old pal Bob Harper down and falling over him and his horse. Sporrán was absolutely uncontrollable and was galloping between Sillybody's (Bob's mount's) hind legs. The second time we got round to the same place Sporrán, not seeing an opening, made one with a mad dive between the rails and the favourite. Fred Hassall yelled out some pretty strong compliments to me about my riding, but I couldn't stop to listen for Sporrán went on and won as he liked, the difficulty being to pull him up.

Thus ended my first ride on a doped horse, and I shall never forget it. By the time I had weighed in Sporrán was dead lame again but won on each of the two subsequent occasions on which he was "doctored." The following year at Cartmel when it was known that Sporrán was again doped, the other jockeys made as much delay at the post as possible so that the dope would be dead in my fellow. Johnny Fergusson found he had a broken stirrup leather, I suppose he came out with a broken one—anyhow he had to go back for another and by the time the flag fell Sporrán was dead in my hands. He finished nearer last than first. I think riding a doped horse over hurdles is bad enough, but over a country it was a queer business and one I never relished. Later I had two horses I trained—Victoria Cross and Cromborg—doped and rode them myself. Victoria was a jady animal and would never "put it all in," so we doped her for a little 'chase at Shincliffe. Although she gave me a very rough passage and some anxious moments she won easily from a field of ten or eleven runners. Cromborg was known to be one of the laziest horses in training. He had run on almost every course in England, and had

won many races, but had got sick of racing. One always had to ride him with the whip up, or he would have gone to sleep. He went like wind with me when under the dope at Shincliffe, jumping off with his horses and going readily up to the front. I found it was useless trying to steady him so let him go his own pace, wondering when he would steady down. At the open ditch the second time he crashed through the rail, fell and lay there. I don't think he ever saw the fence, having galloped himself blind. For fully three days the poor old fellow was bathed in perspiration and stood trembling, completely off his food.

Mention of the defunct Shincliffe meeting reminds me of Mr. D. H. Gibb of Ravenspark, Irvine. He was a steward at most of the Scottish meetings, and I think he knew more about racing than most men. The very quiet, unassuming manner in which he went about disarmed people and made them imagine he wasn't half as shrewd as he was. I formed quite a wrong estimate of him myself till I came to ride for him. Then I discovered what a good judge he was, and how few mistakes he made. If he ever told me to jump off in front and stop there, adding: "And I think you'll win it," he was seldom wrong. Well, at Shincliffe on one occasion my brother Alfred was riding an Irish mare called Rightwell for George Kennedy. I knew they fancied her no end, and, as I was riding Fenris for Mr. Gibb I told him of the danger. He replied: "You'll win it—jump him off in front and let him go along." I did so and had an armchair ride, winning at 8 to 1.

After a bad smash at Doncaster I was getting myself into condition to ride Buffalo Bill in the Grand National. It was an anxious time, and Mr. Rogerson had his doubts as to whether I should be fit to take the mount, though I was riding as many gallops as possible each day and was doing a lot of walking three days a week out shooting. In addition I was skipping and boxing—all to get wind and muscles into top gear for the undoubted strain riding round Aintree is.

Buffalo Bill was in the big 'chase at Nottingham and I begged Mr. Rogerson to let me ride him to see how I

got on. The race was two miles, and when only two fences from home I looked all over a winner when something fell in front of me. This lost me so much ground that I fancied at the moment I hadn't time to get set going again to win. I finished bang up fourth, and after the race was over I thought if I had persevered I should have won. Mr. Rogerson had backed his horse each way and imagined it was owing to weakness that I had been beaten. It was really that I didn't want to knock the horse about in what I thought for the second was a forlorn hope.

A day or two afterwards Mr. Rogerson arranged I should give Buffalo Bill his final gallop before the National, so we took him to Grindon Race-course, near Sunderland, and galloped him $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles over fences there. A doctor was present to examine me when I pulled up. In this winding-up gallop my brother Alfred rode Harvest Home, Tom Easy was up on Miss Tighe. It was as good a gallop as I ever rode in, and after it Dr. Stuart passed me as Ar. The following week I went to Rugby to ride Buffalo Bill in the big 'chase there. At this time he was a 66 to 1 chance for the National a week hence. At Rugby he had a few good horses to beat, including one of Hunt's—Prince Tuscan—which was being backed for the National and was thought a certainty for the Rugby race.

When Mr. Rogerson came to see me pass the scale I told him that I should have won at Nottingham if I had gone about my business despite being baulked as I was. On hearing this he went to have a bit extra on, and I believe it all worked out at 8 to 1. I was always there with Prince Tuscan and won on a tight rein. Mr. Rogerson was a very generous man when he had a win and backed Buffalo Bill to win me £500 if successful in the National. That night he went shortened in the betting from 66 to 33 to 1.

I wanted to go to scale at 9 st. 7 lb. at Liverpool. This I could have done quite easily without wasting, but it would have meant riding on a 3-lb saddle. This might have been all right if one could have guaranteed one's mount would do the right thing all round. They

so often do the wrong thing at Aintree, and if a horse pecks when you're in a three-pound saddle it is probably domino! I had always said I would never waste unnaturally, and I never did before or after but walk as I would that four pounds was still there, and I didn't get it off till the morning of the great race, which I thought I had a real chance of winning. He had won four of his five races, had never made a mistake and only lacked experience of Liverpool fences. In addition he was the best jumper I ever rode.

The night before the race a friend, Dick Stanton (whose brother is training in Belgium), and I went to stay with Mr. T. Scholefield, who had several horses at Epsom before the war. Early next morning Dick had me out to get that 4 lb. off—a long walk, no breakfast, a draught from a chemist and a Turkish bath did it.

My friend and I walked round the course and then back to the weighing-room in which a number of jockeys "in physic" had to stand a good deal of chaff as first one and then another made a dart for the lavatory. "Riding a bad jumper to-day?" is the question put to those with these urgent calls. This National day was about the worst on record, certainly one of the worst on which I ever rode. Arthur Nightingall will bear me out in this.¹ It was bitterly cold, and, to make matters worse, I was so near the weight I couldn't even wear a shirt under my silk jacket. I just did 9 st. 7 lb., and Mr. Manning, when passing me, added the usual caution, "You'll add nothing, Taylor," knowing that some jockeys slipped a shirt and muffler on after passing the scale. I had no sooner weighed out than there was a rumour of "No race" owing to the fences and course being thick with snow. I think all the jockeys, with the exception of Halsey and myself, signed a petition for the race to be put off, and with this petition most of the stewards agreed. I fancy the late Mr. Charles Cunningham really over-persuaded them; anyway, out we had to go in the snow.

On throwing me into the saddle Mr. Rogerson told me that he had backed Buffalo Bill to win me another £500, making £1000 in all. I thanked him and said I

¹ See *My Racing Adventures*, by Arthur Nightingall, p. 169.

hoped I should have to hold my hand out. Mr. Arthur Coventry was not long in getting us off, remarking: "Now then jockeys, it's a beast of a day; I want to get you off, please help me." We had one false start, but got a very good send off at the second attempt. I don't think any horse was so unlucky as was Buffalo Bill that day, apart altogether from the two gaping cracked heels which we had been unable to get right. I ran him in light plates in front and none on his hind feet, having these removed at the last moment, thinking that this would stop the snow-balling. I got a good place at the start and my little fellow with his light weight bounded over the first three fences like a rubber ball. Laying alongside A. Nightingall (on Grudon, the ultimate winner), I thought, if anything, mine was jumping a little too big. Over Becher's and round the Canal Turn he sailed as though he had never done anything but jump Liverpool fences all his life. The open ditch—the biggest artificial fence on any race-course in the world—he cleared beautifully, whilst those who saw the race say that Buffalo Bill landed yards over the water jump.

On going into the country the second time I thought I was going better than anything else, lying about fourth, my horse doing everything I could wish. When we came to that tricky open ditch at the Canal Turn, and I felt him do it beautifully, landing up alongside Nightingall on Grudon, I saw myself going to cash Mr. Rogerson's cheque for £1000. On swinging him round at the turn, however, his legs skated from under him, he made a mighty effort to save himself, floundered and was almost down again on the snowy, greasy ground. I left it to him, knowing how clever he was, but when he had regained his balance his head was the wrong way, and I had both feet out of the stirrups. It seemed madness to go on for, from being third, I was now last of the horses still standing up—there had been a lot of falls. I hesitated for a few seconds and then went on, riding at Valentine's for all I was worth without either feet in the irons. I had found one of them by I got to the next fence, and was astonished to see some of the field just in front. I up with my whip and gave Buffalo a couple—

the only time I ever hit him—and he responded gamely, passing first one and then another beaten horse. There were only about five in front of me now, one of these I passed and Titch Mason on Laventer, and I fought it out for third place which I secured easily at the finish on one of the gamest animals I ever threw a leg over, and one of the unluckiest horses ever beaten in a National.

On reaching the paddock Mr. and Mrs. Rogerson congratulated me on my perseverance having saved the place money, and it was then we saw how near Buffalo Bill had been to being down, his hocks and quarters being plastered with mud.

My National mount for 1902 having broken down, I never thought so late in the year to get another ride in the big race. I went to Liverpool to ride Harvest Home for Mr. Rogerson in the Stanley 5-year-old 'Chase, and to put in a bit of time before the National, I went along to the luncheon-room, never thinking of the possibility of a spare ride at such short notice. However, Mr. Tom Coulthwaite had been looking for me everywhere, and at last Ernie Acres as a last hope tried the luncheon-room. He yelled out at the top of his voice: "Harry Taylor! Anyone seen Harry Taylor?"

Of course I soon responded, and he said: "We want you to ride Fairland in the National and the other jockeys are now about ready to come out." There was I with not even my collar and tie off. However I was across to the weighing-room in a few seconds, into breeches and boots like a quick-change artist, and, with colours under my arm, got the saddle and into the scale "just in time," as Mr. Manning remarked. In the dressing-room I learned that Ernie Acres was unable to do the weight himself—being about 6 lbs. over, to which information I replied: "Well, I've just finished a pretty hefty lunch which I'm afraid will be pretty well churned about before I get back"—and it *was*!

They had all gone to the post when Mr. Coulthwaite got me into the saddle and told me that I was on £500 if I won. "I think you've only to stand up to be back here first," said the Hednesford trainer, who added: "As soon as ever the flag drops let her stride

along to the front and keep there as long as ever you can."

As soon as Mr. Coventry dropped the flag I dashed to the front of the other twenty runners, and was sailing along by myself over the first and also the next five fences. I think it was the fence jumping out of the plough which Fairland caught with her chest. She turned a complete somersault, throwing me sliding along in the mud. I wasn't hurt, but knowing there were a score of horses galloping behind me, I thought it best to lie flat where I was. Some of them tapped my ribs as they galloped over me—and I think horses' hoofs never look so big as when you see them, glancing up as I did. They looked to me about the size of dinner-plates. When I thought they must all have passed me I got up, only to find the ghost of a horse above me—down I went again like a ninepin. It was many months after that Algy Anthony told me he was tailed off on the Duke of Westminster's Drumree (not Drumcree), and just as his mount had taken off he saw me straightening myself as he crashed into me on one of the biggest horses in the race. Algy was awfully sorry about it, and I saw him have the hardest of luck himself the following year when riding King Edward's Ambush II. He was in front and came down at the very last fence. However, he had had the satisfaction of winning a National on the same horse for King Edward.

Reverting to Algy knocking me over, I was laid out unconscious and four policemen carried me back to the stands on a hurdle. I was shivering with cold, there was no fire in the surgical room and a doctor couldn't be found for some time. I was given some hot whiskey, and wrapped in cotton-wool. I do not know how long I was in Liverpool Infirmary, but I do remember a wire coming from my friend Billy Croasdale to tell me that Fairland had won the Lancashire 'Chase at Manchester by twelve lengths pulling up. That was nice medicine for me! She won it again the following year by four lengths, beating twenty-one runners, and was third the year after, carrying a big weight, so that with the 9 st. 10 lbs. she had to carry in the National she must have won had she

stood up. It is one more case of "horses for courses." Liverpool fences she didn't like, though a beautiful jumper, and I think she only got round once at Aintree, though she ran there three or four times.

I left Mr. Rogerson, for whom I had been training near Durham, in May, 1902, and as I had several horses belonging to other patrons, I looked round for new quarters. I finally fixed on Silvio House, at Richmond, Yorks.

I left this ancient Yorkshire racing and training centre at the end of the jumping season and started to train on the sands at Seaton Carew, near West Hartlepool. I remained there for two or three seasons, and very well horses did there.

I now come to the story of my being warned off the Turf in 1907. I will try to set down the facts as they really were.

In the first place a mare called Fair Do's, owned by Mr. A. Lawson, a Cumbrian hunting gentleman and a kinsman of Sir Wilfrid Lawson's, arrived at my place on Saturday, May 4th, with a view to running at Cartmel on Whit-Monday. I had just about a fortnight in which to sharpen her up. This mare, taken at the end of a season and only for a few days, was, by the irony of fate, the means of my undoing. I knew she had never seen a race-course, and soon found that she was worthless. However, I was to ride her in a Selling Hurdle at Cartmel, so gave her a school or two.

A week before her race I took Weather Eye to Southwell where he beat a good field, and immediately after the race Major Gordon asked me if I would ride one for him in the Selling Hurdle at Cartmel. I told him I was sorry, but I was already engaged. Then Stuart Bell came up and enquired if mine was any good. I told him candidly that it wasn't. "Well, Major Gordon's is pretty useful," said Stuart. "I'm training it, and you know how difficult it is to get a reliable jockey at Cartmel, so we want to get fixed up." I thereupon wired to Mr. Lawson to see if he would release me, and got a telegram back to the course at Southwell agreeing that I should ride for Major Gordon. I was then told the horse was Silver

Brent, and that I should ride a winner. "I hope so," I replied, "Carmel is one of my lucky meetings."

As a matter of fact the 1907 fixture there was one of the most anxious and tragic I ever attended. On the Saturday previous I took two or three horses to Scarborough to run, and we had the greatest difficulty in getting them through to Cartmel afterwards. I think with great trouble we got as far as Carnforth that night, and walked part of the journey on the Sunday morning. I know that I was so worn out with the whole proceeding that I was as near as possible returning to Wetherby where I had several rides offered. Had I not promised Major Gordon to ride for him I should certainly have turned back for Yorkshire and left my brother with the Cartmel string. It's ten thousand pities I didn't! I've always been convinced that it is the small things—the spin of a coin—which have the biggest influence upon one's life.

Everything went wrong that week-end. Coming from the course on the Sunday we were summoned for furious driving; we couldn't find a room of any sort at Cartmel, so hired a motor to take us to Grange, and had only gone a mile when we were pulled up for exceeding the speed limit. Shortly after we had a burst tyre—and tyres weren't so easily mended in those days as they are now. On the Monday I weighed out for Silver Brent and then put my brother Fred in the scale for Fair Do's. He passed perfectly right. There was only another runner, a horse called Fossore, so that when the betting opened my mount, Silver Brent, was a 3 to 1 on chance. I went to saddle him but he could not be found, and all this time they were betting odds on. The bell rang for the jockeys to get up, and there was I with saddle and cloths but no horse—for the very good reason that he hadn't been sent to the meeting. I had had no word of altered plans from either owner or trainer and was naturally expecting Silver Brent to turn up every minute. Eventually his number was taken out of the frame, and I went on to the stand to watch the race between two bad horses. Fossore was a race-horse, however, compared to mine, but refused at the first hurdle, leaving

Fair Do's to go on alone. Even then I had to go and stop my brother who went four miles instead of two, those responsible not having taken down the last hurdle, as they should have done for the finishing circuit. My brother, knowing that the hurdle should be gone when he had to finish, went on riding.

On coming in to weigh he was 14 lb. over weight—just imagine it! A jockey goes four miles instead of two, is a stone over-weight on coming to pass the scale, and his brother had weighed out for a hot pot which couldn't be found! It all looked like a huge ramp, and I can almost forgive the Stewards who warned me off. But though I paid the penalty, I was innocent as a baby. I say now, as I said in front of the Stewards at Old Burlington Street: “If you gentlemen think that with all my experience I could not find a better way of stopping a horse than putting over-weight on, then I ought to be warned off for ever.”

I always had strong suspicions as to who the guilty party was but could never bring it home, though he was my main witness at the enquiry. On his death-bed he repeatedly asked for me to go and see him as he had something to communicate, but not knowing he was so near his end I did not go. My mother went, and to her he told everything.

I could never quite understand why the Stewards considered me so blameworthy in not making certain Major Gordon's horse was, or was not at the meeting. I have never heard of a jockey engaged to ride an animal a few days beforehand making enquiries if the animal is on the spot.

Afterwards I discovered why Silver Brent failed to put in an appearance. The Selling Race not having filled, it was reopened, and I believe that Silver Brent was not entered the second time, but the Race Committee feeling sure he was to run, put his name in on their own responsibility, so that it appeared on the card. How I could in anyway be held responsible for this action entirely defeats me. Had the horse's name been omitted from the card, then I might have made some enquiries, but during a lengthy experience I never remember ever

going to find out if a horse I had been specially engaged to ride had arrived on the course.

The warning-off ban suddenly reduced my income from an average of £2500 a year to nothing, and at the wrong time of life. My many falls had done me no good, and I could not be expected to come again as a younger man would have done, even if I was only out of the saddle for a couple of years. Unfortunately I was off more, although I never imagined for a moment I should be, though I believe that Charlie Wood was off ten years,—a big slice out of a man's life!

In 1911 my application for reinstatement was successful. I knew before I received Messrs. Wetherby's official intimation, Mr. Russell Munro kindly wiring me the good news. I believe that I had a good deal of influence in my favour from Mr. Reid Walker, and also from that fine sportsman the late Mr. C. W. Henderson.

I thought I had nothing to do but start riding again, but received a shock when I sent for my jockey's licence, only to be told that this could not be granted. So the ban was removed upon me as a trainer. I could now go on to any course, but must not ride as a jockey. Not for another year was a jockey's licence issued to me. From 1911 I was with Sir Henry Lawson at Brough Hall, Catterick. We had been to the Doncaster Sales and bought some yearlings, which I broke in, but which unfortunately proved to be not much good when tried.

My first ride after my reinstatement was on Mr. Kitchen's Disturbance, on which I just got beaten in a hurdle race at Wetherby. What a difference "just getting beaten" is to winning in the eyes of the public, especially in the case of one coming back after five years' absence from the saddle. I am not claiming that it was so in my case, but it is often the case that the jockey on the second or third, rides a better race to get there than the jockey on the winner. Those who are real judges can see this for themselves, but how many real judges are there who watch races? It is their pocket which influences most spectators in their judgment. I had to put up with such remarks as "Lost your old dash, Harry!"—"You haven't the nerve you used to have, old man!" and so on.

My next ride was at the same meeting on the late Mr. Godfrey Long's French Bonnet. Mr. Long was well known, as his father had been before him, in the Continental horse trade. They exported a lot of useful animals from their place at Spofforth near Harrogate, and he was clerk of the course of the Wetherby meeting in which he was much financially interested. I looked like winning on French Bonnet two fences from home, when down she came and crumpled me up. I was taken to Harrogate Infirmary—collar-bone and two ribs broken! My second ride and out of the game once more. I have never really been right since that fall on French Bonnet and was no sooner ready to ride again than the War broke out. This was another set-back; at every turn the odds seemed to be against me. My old pal, "Bob" Harper, sent for me to help him with Army Remounts at Wetherby, and I was glad to accept the offer. Bob was a great horseman and a true sportsman in the best and every sense of the word. He was one of the gamest fellows who ever rode at an open ditch, and, when riding as an amateur, was at the top of the list for two or three seasons.

After I had been at Wetherby some little time we were unfortunate enough to get strangles amongst our horses, so had to close the depot down. I was on the point of returning to Durham when a Capt. Watson, whom I had met out hunting with the North Durham Hounds, came over from York and asked me to take charge of the Canadian horses at the York depot. We fixed it up there and then, and I think I should have had between 250 and 300 animals under my care. From early morning till dark it was exercise, exercise, exercise. We were never done getting them in and getting them out, and things were made more difficult because I had men under me who knew nothing about horses. Two of the few useful chaps I had was poor little Tommy Lofthouse and George Gough. Both were ex-Malton jockeys who had ridden a lot of winners in their day.

After leaving the Remounts I was not across a horse for four years and then went to ride a little brown horse called 'Tar Baby' at Manchester for Mr. Harold Bazley. I shall always remember the few days following that ride,

—they proved to me how impossible it is to go three miles over fences without having one's muscles in proper order. Mr. Bazley, with whom I often stayed at that pretty little Cheshire village, Whitchurch, really wanted to give me a winning mount, and the thought and action were both kindly and much appreciated.

I now come to my last mount in public. It was at Sedgefield on Mr. C. Hodgson's Silver Rhine,—a faint-hearted animal, not worth twopence. That ride finally decided me to make a parcel of my boots and breeches, and there they remain to-day. I was convinced that unless a jockey is getting daily practice he cannot do himself or his mounts justice."

Ernest Davey is another ex-National Hunt jockey who has had an interesting and varied career. He was born at Piercebridge, near Darlington, in 1890, at a time when Jack Hett was riding a good deal in the North, and training a few winners of small races at local National Hunt meetings. The Hetts were prominent hunting men and also very keen on the Turf, though we have not seen Jack or his dark green colours on a race-course for a couple of years. I fancy it was the local talk of the Hett horses and the sporting atmosphere of the district in which he lived which made Davey decide upon a Turf career. He started life as house-boy to Mr. J. H. Pease at Piercebridge, but soon went to R. Gordon at Wroughton to ride over fences. Like most country lads in Yorkshire (and it is the same in Ireland) he had learned to ride bareback almost as soon as he could walk, and had never lost an opportunity of getting on top of a horse. He had his first mount in public in 1905 at Cheltenham, when he rode Irish Oak in a race won by Capt. Beatty on The Chemist. In 1910 he went to Ireland to ride and remained in that country for eight years, winning his share of races and making many friends. He returned to this country with that good Irish sportsman Capt. Darby Rogers, who crossed the channel to train at Sparsholt. Davey's next move was to Capt. Gooch—a name so intimately associated with the Church, the Army, the hunting field and the Turf. For him Davey rode for a time and then took up training on his own behalf at

Sparsholt, and though he turned out a fair number of winners during the next five years he found, like other trainers, that it is sometimes easier to win races than to collect training fees. He returned to the North to assist first Bellerby at Hambleton, then Sir John Renwick at Malton, and about 1926 went as private trainer to the late Mr. J. Johnstone at Lochmaben. In 1933 he suddenly ended that connection, taking with him the two apprentices, J. Reeves (a very promising boy) and Pat O'Keeffe. After a few weeks he was appointed as private trainer to Mr. W. Webster, and equally suddenly, at his own request, dissolved partnership with that gentleman, and moved to Malton. S. Seymour, an ex-flat race jockey who had previously trained for Mr. Webster and had remained in his service, was reinstated as trainer. I fancy Mr. Webster, in 1935, has about as big a string of horses (about fifty) in training as any individual owner.

On the same afternoon that Harry Wragg rode three winners at Manchester to bring to an end the 1934 flat season, Jack Fawcus steered three winners under National Hunt Rules at Lingfield. The latter trio were all owned by Mr. J. V. Rank, a comparatively new-comer to the Turf, for whom Fawcus first rode in 1933. No one will deny that Jack is one of the best and most talked-of cross-country riders of this decade. He will be much more in the limelight ere he hands in his colours. From the days he was a boy at Durham's old-established Grammar School and riding his father's horses schooling, to hounds and in point-to-point races in Northumberland, I have known and liked him. Moreover from those days (not so very long ago!) I prophesied that he would make a great horseman. Naturally I have followed his career with more than ordinary interest, and now I want, and expect, to see him set the seal on his ability and reputation by riding a National winner. He indubitably will do this, though Nationals don't necessarily come the way either of the best horses or the best horsemen. True, I've seen more than one National lost through either lack of ability to help a horse, or such lack of condition on the part of the rider that a potential winner has been hampered and hindered to defeat by a tired rider.

For instance, had not Mr. Pennington, who seems to have rather dropped out of the racing game (like many others, I believe, through the attentions of the tax gatherer), been much more exhausted than his one-eyed Bovril III, he must have won the Grand National of 1927. He is by no means an isolated case.

As I have said, I have known Jack Fawcus since he was a little boy. He then used to come to Hexham and a few other northern jumping meetings at which I acted as judge and at which his father was running horses. Jack was very keen to be "going round" long before his father put him up. It was bred in him, and in racing what is bred in the bone usually comes out in the flesh, though the rule is not invariable.

The present Lord Rossmore (whose father was such a famous man on the Turf and in the hunting field) confesses he dislikes horses. His sister, of course, is Lady Abe Bailey, and a fine horsewoman. He once told me that he was thrown and dragged by a pony when a child. None of Sir John Renwick's boys ever cared for riding, and I could mention other sons of prominent hunting and racing men who have had no inclination to carry on family tradition. It is the same with breeding blood-stock. You have one animal which turns out useful, and believe you've found a cross which just nicks, yet the same sire and dam may never produce another worth a cockle. There are lots of instances of this. There are also, of course, cases of parents having left very strict testamentary conditions which disinherited their sons if they took to racing or race-riding. The fifth Earl of Chesterfield (whose son won two Oaks and a St. Leger) was debarred from much active connection with Turf and chase by the following clause in the will of the fourth Earl :

"If in any case my godson, Philip Stanhope, shall at any time keep, or be he concerned in keeping, any race-horse or pack of hounds, or reside one night at Newmarket, that infamous seminary of iniquity and ill-manners, during the course of the races there, or shall resort to the said races, or shall lose in one day at any game or bet whatsoever, the sum of £500, then, in any of the cases

aforesaid, it is my express will that he, my said godson, shall forfeit and pay out of my estate the sum of £50,000 to and for the use of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster."

I believe there was a somewhat similar clause in the will of the late famous Leeds penciller, Mr. Joe Pickersgill. At any rate his son was rarely ever seen on a race-course, though the prohibition and disability did not include hunting in his case. Indeed, he was for several years a very popular Master of Hounds and spent the latter years of his life in Ireland hunting. He was Limerick M.F.H. at the time of his death in 1934.

No restrictions have been placed on Jack Fawcus, and he is true to type. Born in 1908, he is the only son of Lieut.-Colonel J. S. Fawcus of Dunstansteads, in the Northumberland Percy country, and was reared a sensible, robust, athletic, wholesome, gentlemanly boy. He is good at most things in the open-air—shooting, football, golf and tennis, as well as in the saddle, and is not above taking his coat off and doing a day's work at busy seasons on the home farm. A cultured young man, his turning professional made no difference to his social standing, and I do not wonder he is so popular. He has charming manners, a delightful smile, a most pleasing voice, is good at cards, an expert dancer—in fact possesses all those attributes which make a young man a welcome addition to a house party. We have stayed as fellow-guests at country houses and it is pleasing to me to see that flattery and lionising have in no way spoiled him.

His father, now sadly crippled with rheumatism, used to ride a bit over jumps, whilst Jack's great-grandfather was the best amateur of his day in the North. The *New Sporting Magazine* of 1832 described him as such after he had ridden one or two winners at Newcastle. He had a wonderful mare called Meg Merrilees on which he won all before him at Kelso, Morpeth and other Border fixtures. Jack had a little point-to-pointing before he began to ride in public over made fences. I had the real pleasure of putting up as judge his number the first time he rode a winner under Rules, this being when he rode Mrs. B. Fairfax's Beautiful Maud to victory in a hurdle

race at Hexham on June 26th, 1897. At Carlisle on Easter Monday, 1931, he rode four winners in one afternoon and repeated this feat on Easter Monday, 1932. On the first of these red-letter occasions he had rather a bad fall and cracked a rib, but though in pain, he drove me into Newcastle to catch a train, I believe danced all night in Newcastle and went on to Wetherby the following day to ride another winner. He has several times ridden three winners in one day, which is not so often done at the winter game as on the flat. In 1932 he was top of the list of amateur riders and that year rode Grakle in the Grand National. For blunt, outspoken Tom Coulthwaite to have selected him was indeed a compliment, for though (like the late William P'Anson) no horseman himself, Tom Coulthwaite is a good judge of those who *are* horsemen, and a very plain critic into the bargain. He doesn't throw any bouquets to either amateurs or professionals if they don't very fully deserve them. However, he was very pleased with the way Fawcus rode Grakle schooling and told me he promised as well as any and better than most of the amateurs he had ever had at Hednesford—and most of them have been there at one time or another. In 1933 Fawcus settled all questions regarding the future of his permit by taking out a licence as a professional and since then has been mainly in the South, though in 1934 he won the Scottish Grand National on Southern Hero. To some he may appear to ride a bit short for steeple-chasing, but he is naturally short in the leg and it is noticeable that he sits down in his saddle and that there is little daylight between him and the pigskin. He combines a hunting seat with a racing position, which may sound rather a contradiction, but nevertheless he somehow does it. Though he has had his full share of falls these do not affect youth as they do older, heavier, less agile men, and Jack Fawcus has many years of activity in the saddle in front of him. One usually sees him shown in Press photographs with a very broad smile on his face, but it has struck me that since he has turned professional he has changed very considerably and become a much graver, less cheery man. He can, however, put off this altered demeanour when he

gets to his beloved far Northumbrian home and out with the Percy Hounds, in which country his forebears have hunted and furthered the interests of hunting for generations. In January, 1935, Jack gave his views on "short leathers" as follows :

"When I began as a youngster," he said, "I rode at hunting length, but found that my feet were catching on the jumps, and that started me to ride shorter. Some very good advice was given to me by the Ayr trainer, John McGuigan, for whom I rode a big, heavy horse with no mouth at all, who never took a fence more than half-way up. John instructed me to shorten my leathers until my knees were level with, or almost above the top of, the saddle. To use his own words, I had to 'sit on his tail and hold him up.' It proved highly satisfactory, as in this position I was able to hold the horse up and steady him—he being a very hard puller—sufficiently to stay the distance, which was three miles seven furlongs, to win by a fence. This horse was Nigger Minstrel III, who won the Adamhill Cup at Bogside. In those days I was riding as an amateur, and as I had not had a deal of experience I started experimenting, using different lengths of leather. Finding that not two horses are alike, I varied my leathers according to the animal, sometimes as much as two holes. I am convinced personally that the short leather is most suitable and is distinctly advantageous for race-riding over both fences and hurdles on account of the pace at which races are now run."

CHAPTER VI

MEMORIES OF TRAINERS

THERE are a number of men training to-day who were similarly engaged thirty years ago, but there have also been scores who have come and gone. Although thirty years ago trainers were no longer officially described as "training grooms," and they had years before ceased to wear the livery of those who employed them, they occupied a different status, were, in the main, rather a different class socially, intellectually, and in manners to many who hold licences to-day. The introduction of so many men of birth and rank has had an elevating influence and has raised the position of trainers from that of a better sort of groom to that of a professional man. Many of the old school were admittedly skilful, genial, painstaking men, popular and most knowledgeable. Nevertheless they were often rough and uncultured, fond of the bottle, unrestrained with their tongues and often with their fists. I am, of course, generalising, for there were noticeable exceptions—men whose conduct, dress and speech were always that of well-behaved gentlemen. The science of training has altered considerably in my day. It used to be said of the late William I'Anson "he is a great trainer when he has animals which will stand his methods." This referred to his severity, and to the amount of strong work he gave the horses under his charge. There were more long-distance races then, and I think the majority of the older trainers had not quite departed from something allied to the old severe "Yorkshire Sweats" at one time popular, though discontinued by most of those in the profession by the dawn of this century. Even famous old John Osborne (who said that "when I gallop horses I like to

gallop them for brass") was nevertheless a great believer in abundance of work for horses. Despite this, he used to say that some trainers left their races behind them on the gallops at home, and no doubt he was correct. The whole system was one of severity—a legacy which had been handed down from the very earliest days of heat-racing, when horses sometimes galloped (not as fast as they do now though) twelve or sixteen miles in an afternoon. It must, then, have been a case of the survival of the fittest. I remember when Mr. George Gunter, and his right-hand man, Bob Harper, began training at Wetherby just about thirty years since, they believed in bringing horses on to the course bang on their toes, fit to jump out of their skins, and carrying a good deal more flesh than the older generations thought proper. Some of the latter laughed rather satirically and said: "You've made a mistake, you should have those horses at an agricultural show." But when the Wetherby horses won, and won again and again, the die-hards in the North began to revise their system and to admit that there was something in the theories of the "Wetherby Wizards" and others, that whilst race-horses should not have a lot of flabby fat on them and must be well muscled, they should not be tucked up and drawn fine like greyhounds, or galloped at home till they were "jady" and listless when they came on to a race-course. The late Captain Harry Whitworth, like others, was a great believer in weighing horses, and judged their improvement by their increase in weight whilst also doing work. He applied his theories to hunters as well as race-horses, and I have seen him put his horses on to the weigh he had specially constructed at his home near Pocklington. He, and some trainers I know, claim that there is undeniable truth in the theory that horses will win races when at their best weight, so long as that weight is not mere flabby fat. The argument is not infallible, for there are many "funky" animals, shy feeders, and horses on to which it seems impossible to get flesh, which, despite all this, win races. They are a constant anxiety to their trainers, and in the parade ring would never be picked out as likely winners "on looks." In my early days there were still some

trainers who adopted old-fashioned methods in connection with such animals as these. Quite recently I heard of one trainer (Mr. A. Blake) giving eggs to some of his horses. The Hon. George Lambton has recorded that he did likewise with Canterbury Pilgrim on the day previous to that on which she won the Oaks in 1896 for the late Lord Derby. Says Mr. Lambton :

"The day before the Oaks it was frightfully hot, and when Canterbury Pilgrim stepped out of her box, on arriving at Epsom, the sweat was running off her in streams, and even Flare Up could not put her in a good temper. That day she ate nothing, so we gave her some stout with eggs beaten in it, a beverage that Flare Up knew well in his younger days and was very fond of. By next morning she was herself again."

There was at one time a common practice. I remember in the old days sluggish, lazy horses being given a third of a bottle of whisky before they ran. In the late autumn of 1934 I read that there was such a glut of wine in France it was selling for 4d. per gallon and was used for horses with considerable success. It was stated "red wine added to a quantity of bran or maize has been found to have a greater tonic effect than much larger quantities of oats. A horse which was given two quarts of wine a day was found to increase over 50 lb. in weight in a few weeks."

Now, as I have said, all this is only a reversion to ancient methods when eggs, wine and horse bread were a regular part of the dietary of race-horses.

Take, for instance, *The Gentleman's Recreation*, written by Nicholas Cox in 1674. He directed :

"If you are to run a plate, which is not till three o'clock in the afternoon, then by all means have him out early in the morning to air, and when he is come in feed him with toasts in sack, for you must consider that as too much fulness will endanger his wind, so too long fasting will cause faintness."

Again he advises :

"If he appears sluggish and melancholy, then give him an ounce of diapente in a pint of good old malaga sack, which will both cleanse his body and revive his spirits."

He goes on to advocate the use of horse bread made as thus directed by de Grey in his earlier work :

“ Take wheat-meal one peck, rye-meal, beans and oatmeal, all ground very small, of each half a peck, aniseeds and liquorish, of each one ounce, white sugar candy four ounces, all in fine powder ; the yolks and whites of twenty eggs well beaten and so much white wine as will knead it into a paste. Make this into great loaves, bake them well and after they be two or three days old, let him eat, but chip away the outside.”

Fairfax in his *Compleat Sportsman* (1762) gives another recipe for making horse bread, and there are variants in the works of other early writers.

I heard in the 1934 flat season of a Yorkshire trainer who had been giving a shy feeder in his stable bread to eat, which reminded me of the veteran sportsman Mr. R. I. Robson, who used to say that he would feed his horses on golden sovereigns if it would make them win races. At one time, of course, bread was a common ration for horses and gamecocks, though that prepared and baked with meticulous care for race-horses was different to the bread fed to the post-horses and others whose riders called at inns to “ bait ” themselves and their mounts. The commoner sort appears to have been sold by public bakers, and in the manuscripts preserved in the archives of Beverley Corporation are some very interesting references to the control of its manufacture and disposal. For instance in 1458 :

“ With the consent of the wardens, stewards and six others of the craft of bakers, and three and others innkeepers, ordered by the Government, that the said innkeepers shall not bake, nor cause to be baked in any way any horse-bread, but shall buy it from the common bakers and no one else ; penalty 3/4. The common bakers shall yearly for ever serve the innkeepers with such horse-bread good and sufficient, viz., fifteen to the dozen, as often as required by such innkeepers. Provided always that if any of the innkeepers offer to re-deliver any such horse-bread not used, the baker shall take back the bread, if the re-delivery is made within four days in the summer and six in the winter.”

Suspicion and superstition were still potent forces with some trainers in my young days. Even then the

fear of "the nobbler" was not dead, and if a horse, once having left the yard *en route* for a race meeting, was turned back, it was believed that whatever chance it might have had of winning was gone. There were trainers who would never dream of doing more than give their horses walking exercise on the roads on Sundays, and who strongly disapproved of owners coming to "look round" on that day. Old John Osborne was long a churchwarden, and expected his lads to go to church, and even when quaint Martin Gurry (who used to say he "didn't understand much about this religious job") offered some sacramental vessels to his local church he suggested that the inscription should be "From Gurry to God." It is also told of the famous Bill Scott of Malton that drunk or sober he always said his prayers before he went to bed, and that on one occasion, after the horse Sir Tatton Sykes had done very well in a trial, he was found on his knees. Asked what he was praying about he replied: "I'm thanking God Almighty that I've got a b—— smasher at last."

Another story is related of a North-country trainer who called on the local parson to ask for public prayers for Lucy Gray. On the following two Sundays the congregation were duly requested to supplicate for Lucy, and on the third Sunday the trainer went into the vestry before the morning service to tell the vicar that there was no need to repeat the request for prayers. "Is Miss Gray better?" asked the cleric. "*Better!*" retorted the trainer. "Didn't you back her when she won at 8 to 1 last week?"

It is not so long ago that the meets of the local pack of hounds were announced from the pulpit of some country churches, and I have known many Church of England clerics, and more priests of the Catholic Church, who were good horsemen, broad-minded sportsmen, keen on Turf and Chase, and followers of both. Some of these have owned race-horses, ridden regularly to hounds, sometimes competed in point-to-point races, been constant visitors to training stables, helped to name many race-horses, and regularly put in an appearance on race-courses. They have had some common ground on

which to meet men concerned with those matters and have undoubtedly had a wholesome influence. I am reminded of the quatrain :

“ If yer want to know why our church be full,
Well, you ain’t gotter look so far, son——
We’ve got a wiry, clean-limbed, straight young chap,
Wot’s an ’ell of a sportin’ parson.”

This brings one almost naturally to “ Parson ” Parkes, who died from pneumonia in 1920. An Irishman with all the Irishman’s love of a horse, the Parson was for some years a country cleric, but he was much too honest to go on taking the stipend when his heart and interests were elsewhere. I don’t think he waited for any episcopal censure or interference, but just transferred his energies to training race-horses. No doubt he felt as conscience-free as the Rev. J. W. King, for whom John Osborne trained. Not till he won the St. Leger was Mr. King considered to have transgressed ecclesiastically. He replied to the admonition of his diocesan with dignity and restraint thus :

“ It is true that now for more than fifty years I have bred, and have sometimes had in training, horses for the Turf. They are horses of a breed highly prized, which I inherited with my estate and have been in my family for generations. It may be difficult, perhaps, to decide what constitutes a scandal in the church, but I cannot think that in my endeavours to perpetuate this breed and thus improve the horses in the country I have done anything to incur your lordship’s censure. I am fully aware—as I think your lordship must be by this time—that legal proceedings upon your part would be powerless against me, and if therefore I resign the living within your lordship’s diocese, it will not be from any consciousness of wrong, or from fear of any consequences which might ensue in the ecclesiastical courts, but simply because I desire to live the remainder of my days in peace and charity with all men, and to save your lordship the annoyance and the church the scandal of futile proceedings being taken against one who has retired for some time from parochial ministrations and is lying on a bed of sickness at this moment.”

With Apology the Rev. Mr. King (who raced as “ Mr. Launde ”) had won the One Thousand, the Oaks, the

Coronation Stakes at Ascot and the 1874 St. Leger. It was after the latter victory that the Bishop of Lincoln began to sit up and take notice. The following year this Turf-loving parson died a very old man.

Knowing Parson Parkes as I did, I am certain that his reply to those in black-coated authority would have been much briefer and couched in much stronger language than that of Mr. King. The former was essentially Irish in temperament—easily roused, excitable, not averse to what he himself called “an honest English damn,” and full of fun and good nature. He invariably adopted a semi-clerical dress, at any rate so far as a white tie goes, but otherwise, when he became a trainer, he became a trainer, and pitted his wits against those he had to meet on the Turf. I spent many evenings in his company and there are not a few who will with me recall what a vivacious nature he had and what an amusing *raconteur* he was. He won a few races, though he never had any really good horses in his stable at Tilshead in Wilts. He was well established on the Turf thirty years ago and was one of the men to whom a new-comer like myself had pointed out to him as a notable paddock personality. So he was!

I will now take the trainers with whom I came much into contact in alphabetical order. To James Adams, then training at Hambleton (now at Kirbymoorside, Yorkshire), I have already referred at some length in the opening chapter. Next we come to Mr. R. W. Armstrong, the present-day Middleham trainer. He is one of the veterans of the Turf, still as active, as full of vitality and fun as ever he was, despite the fact that he was born as long ago as July 4th, 1865. I do not seem to remember the time when I did not know Bob Armstrong and, looking back from then to the present, what strikes me as most remarkable about the man is his consistency, constancy and youthful old age. He is one of those few men who are always the same to their friends. In other words, he is not given to moods and vacillation, if at times a little impatient. You always know where you have him, so to speak. This is not a common quality amongst trainers, who as a class are temperamental, and often so keyed-up

that even those most intimate with them are not always certain whether it is wise to make the initial advances. Armstrong is a Cumbrian, and another outstanding feature of his make-up is that he looks exactly what he is, and what he has been all his life—one closely associated with horses, riding and racing. There is a certain psychological something in some men who have had as long a contact with the Turf as Bob Armstrong. This stamps itself indelibly, though the facial expression and other idiosyncrasies are not invariable—Parson Parkes hadn't them, neither has Dobson Peacock and many others one could mention, but John Osborne had them, so had dear old Butters, Jim Fagan, Tom Bruckshaw, Martin Gurry and Tom Connor, as have Adams, Jack Drake, the Mansers, Pecks and others.

There have been many discussions in the North as to who amongst those still in harness have trained the longest. I think the palm goes to another old friend of mine, Mr. William Binnie, who began when he was eighteen. Peculiarly enough Mr. Bob Armstrong also started to train at the same age, and when he was still a jockey. I fancy this was allowed in those days for there were then no licences issued to trainers. It will be seen then that the spruce, spry, virile little man has been at the game for a very long time. If he does not quite hold the record in the direction mentioned, I should say that he *does* hold one record in that he has trained for one owner longer than any other trainer has done for the same patron. That sportsman is the Earl of Lonsdale, who for forty years has had, and still has, horses with Armstrong. Even in this Mr. Binnie ran him close, for he must have had horses bred and owned by that wonderful old Haddington sportsman and a distant kinsman of his, the late Mr. G. W. Mason (who died aged eighty-two in 1934), for almost forty years. It may truthfully be said of Armstrong that he has played the sporting game all round. He hunted and rode in pony races in his boyhood, and was actively connected with racing before there were the present stringent restrictions as to jockeys riding at unauthorised meetings. Thus men like himself, John Osborne and others could, and did,

ride one day in events the prize for which was a saddle or maybe £5, and the next day they rode in big races.

Before 1871 anyone could start a race meeting, anywhere, with races of what distance they pleased and for what prizes they could afford to offer. In the year mentioned, however, new rules came into force compelling the registration of assumed names, also that no prize money should be less than £50 for any race. Moreover, post entries were to cease and that no racing under Jockey Club rules should take place prior to the week including March 25th, or after the week which included November 15th. The latter rule was altered a little later to allow the season to open earlier if March 25th fell in the week before Easter Sunday and for racing to continue till November 22nd. These new conditions either brought a lot of small country meetings to an end or relegated them to the realm of "flapping," at which all manner of villainy was rife, as many of us can testify. Bob Armstrong tells some amusing stories of these country meetings and the almost unbelievable things which took place at them.

Armstrong's first winning mount was in a pony race when such events were common at National Hunt meetings. He rode over 200 winners before increasing weight compelled him to stand down. His first notable triumph as a trainer was in 1888 when he was only twenty-three. At the very first Newmarket December sales two years before, he and his patron Mr. J. Jameson had bought Dan Dancer for 200 guineas. He had only run once, Archer having on that occasion won on him at Sandown. In 1887 he won races at Stockton, Lanark and Newmarket for the young Penrith trainer and his patron, who raced as "Mr. Heywood." In 1888 the four-year-old son of The Miser and Pauline had a varied career and varied experiences. In June he was sent to Paris to run in the big hurdle race there. Arthur Nightingall had the mount, but, strong jockey though he was, Dan Dancer took control and ran out of the course.

He began his journey back to Cumberland on June 7th, reached Penrith on a good Sunday evening three days later, and his owners then decided that Dan should



THE AUTHOR (*left*) AND MR "BOB" ARMSTRONG

endeavour to earn the expenses of his abortive trip to France by competing at Ascot. Thus it was that on the following morning Mr. Jameson, Armstrong and Dan's boy all set off with him to Ascot. They did not arrive till late at night, and as no stabling had been booked they had to hunt round for quarters. Eventually the horse was stabled in a cow byre. Fortunately he was not one of those animals which do not rest or feed even when in well-appointed stables. An extra rug was put on him and despite the indignity, the draughts, and his several days-on-end travel, he came out fresh as paint next morning, easily won the Ascot Stakes and left for Penrith almost immediately after the race. This must be about a record week's travelling for a horse, at any rate in these pre-motor road-van days. You can always set Bob Armstrong talking to-day if you mention Dan Dancer, for in addition to the Ascot race, he won four hurdle races that year, three of them at Manchester (one of these being worth £700) and one at Bogside.

Mr. W. May, who is now manager of the Marquess of Zetland's stud at Mouldron, Richmond, Yorkshire, was apprenticed to James Ryan, and he has supplemented the Dan Dancer story with the following memories :

"I went to that Ascot meeting with James Ryan's contingent and found that no beds had been provided for us at the hotel stables. Neither horses nor those in charge of them were catered for as to-day. It was often a case of fighting for what you could get, and we appropriated the first beds we came to above the stables. Later on, however, T. Wadlow's team arrived and it turned out we had got the beds reserved for Wadlow's lads, who used such florid language there was no sleep for anyone till we quitted. I eventually slept on some clean straw sandwiched between Dan Dancer's jockey (Fred Allsopp) and Toby Bates (a promising young apprentice of the late Jim Hopper's) in a stall in the stables. I remember Allsopp as a very thin, tall and delicate lad at this time, and in view of Dan Dancer's waywardness in the Paris Hurdle with a strong jockey like A. Nightingall on his back, it looks as though a bond of sympathy sprang up between them thus enabling Allsopp to win such a nice

race after the jockey had slept on a stable floor and the horse had been in a cow-byre all night. Allsopp was quite young when he won the Derby on Sir Hugo four years later. In that sensational race Sir Hugo beat La Flèche, thought to be certainty."

Allsopp was only forty-three when he died in 1912; during his career he rode 845 winners. I knew him, but he had relinquished his licence the year before I commenced my Turf career.

Reverting to Bob Armstrong, having become too heavy to ride, he then set out to make jockeys and in this he had the assistance of old Jim Griffiths, who acted as his head man, and who gave the Penrith apprentices lessons in seat and hands in the saddle-room. Some of them talk yet of "going to college under old Jim." George Williamson, who won the Grand National on Manifesto (1897), Bob Colling, Dicky Crisp, Sharples, Murray and Howey were all in his "class." Armstrong has a wealth of amusing stories about old Griffiths, who, like many old-time jockeys, got rather too fond of the bottle. He died at Penrith in the October of 1915, having been with Armstrong for seventeen years. In his day he won a couple of Chester Cups, a Doncaster Cup and many other races, including a Cumberland Plate which caused a Turf sensation, owing to the very general opinion that Mr. Tom Lawley, the judge, had made a mistake and that Seth Chandley on Mr. Jardine's Mossypaul had won, not Griffiths on the Marquess of Hastings' Queen's Counsel. Jim, with his abundant experience, was well qualified to teach the little boys under his charge. He put them on a saddle placed on a form, or wooden horse, and taught them how to sit when going round corners, how to shorten their reins, how to take a "steadier" and so on, impressing on them that an essential part of jockeyship was "hands."

On one occasion when Armstrong sent him to Newton-le-Willows (now Haydock Park) races in charge of some horses, Jim went on the spree and did not return to Penrith for some days. He then had a black eye and a very woe-begone appearance. "Jim, this is the last time you go away. After this you stay at home," said Mr.

Armstrong. Putting on a very pained expression the old jockey replied: "Master, you should *thank* me, not *blame* me! How can I help it if they took me for you and wiped off some old scores?" On another occasion Jim asked if he could have a day or two off to bury his father. Armstrong sympathised with him on his loss and asked him how much money he would want. Jim, after careful calculation, thought he could manage with £4, so was handed a fiver to cover any emergency. Next morning when the trainer, Bob Colling and George Williamson were returning from exercise the former remarked that it was a pity about Jim's father. Both the jockeys burst out laughing. "You're hard-hearted devils!" ejaculated the trainer, at which there was more laughter. Colling then related how Jim was in a pub at Penrith, that he had never left the town and was not likely to do so till he had got through the fiver. When he arrived back for duty Armstrong tackled him on his deceit and Griffiths, quick and unabashed, explained: "You should hear me before you condemn me like this. I was a little previous, you see he didn't *quite* dee!" When he had forgotten the incident, Armstrong was again called upon to put his hand in his pocket to assist to bury Jim's father, who had probably been dead for many years.

Armstrong's first head man was Bob Burdon, who died in Ireland, March, 1935. It was with Burdon that Tom Coulthwaite began his Turf career. Burdon was for some time private trainer for the late Mr. H.G. Boardman, a Manchester brewer, who lived at Burton, near Carnforth, and had his horses trained there. He sent Tom Coulthwaite as assistant trainer to Bob Burdon (who married a daughter of old Gib Steel's, the Ayr trainer). It is often said that trainers do not give their patrons sufficient encouragement to bet on their horses when they fancy them. It was otherwise with Burdon. On one occasion Mr. Boardman asked: "What chance have we got, Bob?" The reply was: "Bet all the ready money you have in your pocket; then bet on the nod till the bookies jump off their stools and run away; then run after them and bet again with them." This was a

certainty which came off an easy winner. Mr. R. W. Armstrong was riding, as he usually did, Mr. Boardman's horses.

Although small and wiry, Armstrong had considerable difficulty in keeping his weight down and only recently told me a remarkable story which is additional evidence on a subject I have already referred to when speaking of Jim Fagan. Armstrong on one occasion had to waste to ride, so walked eighteen miles from Penrith into Carlisle and found he was four pounds lighter. He had a cup of tea and walked back to Penrith in four and a half hours to find that he was two pounds heavier than when he set off. All his life he has been a worker and a walker as well as a rider, and has expected all those round him to have the energy, the alertness and precision with which he is endowed. Intimate association with racing has a complex tendency in that it makes men think and act quickly, whilst at the same time being cautious, analytic and far seeing. Bob Armstrong, if not precipitate, is rapid of thought, rapid in his movements and can see through a Turf problem just about as soon as anyone I have ever met. His type is usually impatient with those less blessed with an electric-working brain, and so it is with Bob. During the war years he was training in Ireland, and with him, as head man, went another old friend of mine—William Cotchiefer, who had had a very long Turf innings. He was a great character, a most knowledgeable, painstaking man, and one who, like Armstrong, looked the part. He had ridden a good deal in his younger days, then was head man for Captain (now Sir) John Renwick, later setting up at Malton as a trainer on his own account. When Armstrong returned to Penrith in 1919 Cotchiefer remained at Naas where he died in 1923 at the age of sixty-six. Armstrong left Cumberland the same year for Middleham. He had had this move in his mind for some years, for he had bought Tupgill in the early part of this century but had let it to the late Captain Nat. Scott. His hand was forced in 1923 when Lord Lonsdale bought Clifton Hall and Armstrong's Penrith place for his nephew and heir, Major Anthony Lowther. Captain Scott had died in 1923 and

so was it Armstrong came into his own. With him went his eldest son Gerald, probably the best amateur flat race jockey of this decade.

Gerald Armstrong was born at Penrith, August 8th, 1889, and was educated at Rossall. He was, as one would expect, in the saddle almost as soon as he could walk. In 1917 he enlisted in the 2nd Leinsters in Dublin, went to Kildare Cavalry Cadet School, and in 1918 was granted a commission in the 5th Lancers. Demobilised in 1918, he returned to help his father, but the following year went to succeed the late Joe Cannon as assistant trainer to the Hon. George Lambton. At Christmas, 1922, Gerald returned to Penrith to start training on his own account. His first winner was when Blue Stem at the Carlisle 1923 Easter meeting was steered to victory by Gerald's brother Fred in a steeplechase. Gerald had his first winning ride on Mr. Copeland's Jaboulay in the Lambton Hurdle at Sedgefield on Wednesday, October 11th, 1922. Since then he has more than once topped the list of winning amateurs on the flat, but, like his brother Fred, soon gave up riding under National Hunt rules. Time and time again Bob Armstrong has said to me: "A fine horseman Gerald," and this is not merely parental prejudice, for the old trainer would be just as caustic about the efforts in the saddle of one of his sons as he would about those of anyone else if his opinion was unfavourable. There is no doubt about it, Gerald is a fine horseman. Time and time again I have seen him steal races by sheer brains and ability, when he should really have been beaten. A cultured gentleman in every way, a keen tennis player, a pleasant companion, and inheriting much of his father's vivacity, Gerald Armstrong is a live wire with a happy nature. He rides a nice weight, and is one of those instances when caligraphy *does* give one an index to character and personal attributes. His writing is the neat, light, even, careful type which leads one to expect a young man very particular about his personal appearance, not given to any theatrical displays either on foot or in the saddle, quiet in manner and speech, and particular about detail. All these are attributes of the young Middleham trainer, who has

never had a big string and who still assists his father though the latter is fortunate in having such a faithful head man as Bobby Carr, previously mentioned as the father of the young jockey, Harry Carr.

Fred Armstrong, Gerald's younger brother, was for some time Yorkshire's youngest trainer. He had a short spell training in Ireland after the war and turned out his share of winners there before settling down at Ashgill, Middleham. Fred has an uncle at Penrith, of his own name (long landlord of the "George," but now retired), for whom he trains, and to avoid confusion in his own family circle young Fred has always been known as "Sam," a name which followed him to the Turf. For "Sam" his father bought Ashgill, once the home of the Osbornes. It adjoins Tupton and the boxes at the former place have for some years been full. "Sam" rode 'chasing for a year or two. He has since had a good deal of fun riding to hounds in Ireland in company with his friends, Pat ("Rufus") and Harry Beasley. Anyone who can keep Harry (for Rufus doesn't care so much for the banks) in sight over the Irish banks can ride over any steeplechase course and hold their own in any hunting country. I won't say "Sam" takes his training responsibilities more seriously than either his father or his brother, but they certainly seem to weigh more heavily upon him. Despite the fact that he is still young in years, he wears a worried look in the paddock and strikes one as not enjoying the game quite in the same way as do the other members of the family mentioned. He appears harassed, of less even temperament and more easily upset. This is only a personal opinion, but I have seen him almost weekly for some years and what I have written is the impression he has given me. It may be that he views life generally from rather a different angle to his father and brother and expects a little more from it than they do. He has had a number of offers to train abroad but he has that love of homeland which is so strong in those born and bred in the North Country, and this has kept him in Yorkshire. "Sam" is a very enterprising young trainer always with an eye to the main chance. He has more apprentices than most

trainers and takes a good deal of trouble with them, so that one day he may produce an Archer or Richards.

Continuing these memories of trainers in alphabetical order I come to Frank Bonnor Barling, who had been at the game for a very long time. Like Jim Storie, Thrale and other trainers, he was a vet. as well as a trainer, a combination which goes very well together. Barling went on for years picking up his share of races, and reached his pinnacle when, in 1919, he had such a successful season with Lord Glanely's horses, including the winning of the Derby with Lord Glanely's Grand Parade. That season he finished second in the winning trainers' list to Alec Taylor, horses from his stable having won £30,242 in stakes. Soon after this Barling ceased to train for Lord Glanely, and for a time dropped out of racing owing to a serious illness. When he recovered he occupied his time farming. In 1924 he resumed training for Lord Glanely, but some time prior to his death in April 1935 handed over entirely to his son Geoffrey, who commenced to train in 1932.

Jim Bell and his brothers were always something akin to enigmas on the Turf. One never knew quite where one had them, or what they were going to do next. They were peculiar men in every respect. They knew a horse, and they knew how to ride and train them; moreover, they knew every move on the Turf board. Their early days at the game had been spent in a school fully qualified to teach this. It was a school whose principles often set the Ring (and others) a-thinking. Ted Percy, who for a time had lived and trained at Housenrigg, near St. Bees, was their first mentor. He was a grandson of the famous Bishop of Carlisle of that name, and laid out gallops on his farm, instituting his cousin Fred Allardice as trainer.

Born at Hillaton Castle, Douglas, the three brothers Bell had been connected with horses and hunting all their lives, and commenced to train a few jumpers in Warwick Park near Carlisle, where Sir Loftus Bates later trained. With these horses they picked up some small races at north-country jumping meetings. Stuart Bell, who died some years ago, was useful as an amateur rider, but they decided that relations were best parted, and Jim,

who was also a good cross-country horseman, joined E. J. Percy, Jack Raisin and others who were training at Hambleton. Jim rode a good many winners for the stable which at that time had some useful horses in Harvest Money, Mimram, Cestus, Draconic, Irish Mail, Dunraven, Kendal Queen, and Ordeal. When Raisin went to Kingston Warren Jim and Stuart Bell set up independent training stables at Malton. The former left there in 1899 for Epsom, and though his heart was always more in the jumping game than in flat racing he gradually drifted more and more into the latter. One of the best horses ever under his charge was Trespasser, which three years in succession won the Imperial Cup at Sandown for Mr. Percy Heybourne. With this horse he also won the Two Thousand Hurdle at Manchester in 1920, and a number of flat races, including the Bibury Cup, the Queen's Prize at Kempton and the Salisbury Cup. Bell also trained Vermouth, winner of the 1916 "War National" at Gatwick, and had several successes in the International Hurdle at Gatwick, which race Morganatic Marriage won for him in 1921; Forest Fire, 1922; Chartered, 1924; Tide, 1928 and Telegraphic, 1931. He had the reputation of being something of a wizard with horses which were difficult to deal with—animals which had taken a dislike to racing, had become tricky, and which were given to "chucking it" in the middle of a race, or if challenged. It surprised many of us that he had the necessary patience with such horses, for he never struck one as having this in his somewhat complex make-up. A wonderful pianist, a keen angler, he was by turns hilarious, morose and excitable, and one never knew quite in what mood we should find him in. He died in a London nursing home on August 29th, 1934, and so passed a familiar figure, whose personality and doings were bound up with the early lives and memories of many of us.

Another trainer, who also came to the Turf via the hunting field, is Mr. William Bellerby, who began to hunt with the York and Ainsty when he was a boy. Later he started farming at Acaster Malbis near York, and occasionally had a mount at Wetherby steeplechases,

the first of which I fancy would be on the late Frank Rickaby's Trash at the Easter meeting of 1912. Poor Frank, he would have been well-advised to stick to hunters, but he had a great idea of making two of his sons jockeys and got them apprenticed, then bought horses for them to ride winners on. He had made a success of showing and selling hunters, but his Turf exploits proved an expensive failure, whilst his sons did not ride winners and soon got too heavy. This Yorkshire Rickaby family is in no way connected with the older Rickabys, whose name is deep writ in Turf history.

Reverting to Bellerby, having got a taste for 'chasing, he bought a horse called Goldrill, and later laid down a gallop on his farm at Acaster Malbis. I fancy the first winner he rode would be Maclare (owned by the late Mr. R. T. Murray) at Wetherby in 1920. Dick Murray had bought Branton Court from my old friend Mr. "Bob" Robson, and trained a few horses there. The first winner owned by Bellerby was an old mare named Golden Daisy (also at Wetherby), in 1922. Shortly after this Capt. Sir Peter Grant Lawson sent him some jumpers to train at Acaster Malbis and, in 1925, Bellerby went to Hambleton to train. The following year he won the Lincoln Handicap with the 100 to 1 King of Clubs, which he had bought for 330 guineas after winning at Derby. He sold a half-share of him to Mr. H. W. Snowden of York, but after Lincoln became sole owner. In 1932 he trained the Cumberland Plate winner Lemonition for Mr. E. M. Sykes, a West Yorkshire manufacturer, who seems to have gone out of racing; whilst Sir Peter Grant Lawson, who is in the Guards, found Yorkshire too far off to have his horses trained. Bellerby has now only a small string, but keeps popping up and winning a race. He went to once-famous Whitewall, Malton, this year.

Few men who have once caught Turf fever ever entirely throw off the effects. I do not refer to the transient "backer," so many of whom come for a season, "knock" and depart unhonoured and unsung, but rather to men who have played a part in the limelight of the inner circle of events, as well as behind the scenes,—owners, trainers and jockeys. To them racing, and more

particularly those places at which racing men and race-horses are collected, have an undeniable appeal which is equally irresistible in old age, in adversity, and when they are no longer actors on the stage, whose players, favourites, heroes and stars are ever changing. There is often something pathetic regarding the tenacity of the "have beens,"—the lights of other days. Many of them outlive their generation, and seem to wander aimlessly about paddocks in a world which once was very much theirs, but in which they are almost unknown to the mushrooms who are frequently springing up.

Amongst the few exceptions to this rule of constancy are Captain Percy Wentworth Bewicke and Captain Sir John Renwick. They are both Northumbrians, and both of them seemed to suddenly and decisively write "finis" to their racing careers when they ceased to train. Captain Bewicke has hardly been on a race-course since he gave up training in 1927. He quite plainly stated then, "I don't care if I never see a race-course again." Certainly he had his share of racing in his time, and not only of racing but of race riding, of training, of the excitement of engineering big gambles and all the rest of it. Captain Percy Bewicke indeed played the Turf game all round, and began it in the spacious days when men really did bet, and when he was almost the presiding genius—the Captain Machell, so to speak—of a "school" which had money to burn. The world was less out of joint in those times; country gentlemen were not taxed out of existence, and love of sport was at high-water mark. Calally Castle and other Border mansions kept open house, Mr. Charlie Cunningham was in his heyday, special trains to race meetings and the white wine of France running like water, were the order of an epoch such as we shall never see again.

Born December 22nd, 1862, at Wylam-on-Tyne—the old home, Close House, is now back again in the family—Captain Bewicke comes from a very old Northumbrian line, one of whom was Sheriff of Newcastle so long ago as 1476. I don't think he was one of the earliest recorded of the Bewickes in Northumberland by any means. They have all been sportsmen, and after leaving Harrow, an

army crammer's and Sandhurst, Percy was gazetted, in 1883, to the 15th (The King's) Hussars, which regiment is now linked up with the 19th. The 15th has always been famed for its horsemen and polo players, and, in 1884, the young officer rode his first winner on West Wind in the regimental Subalterns' Challenge Cup, and so his career as an amateur rider began. Soon after this he bought a hurdler and won a race at Plumpton.

Between 1884 and 1897 he won 203 races on his own and other horses, heading the list of amateur riders in 1891 and 1892, with 37 and 38 winning mounts respectively. He won the much-coveted Grand Military Gold Cup in 1892 on Captain A. E. Whitaker's Ormerod, and twice rode the winner of the Grand Hurdle Race at Auteuil. Captain Bewicke had four mounts in the Grand National, and finally handed in his colours as an amateur rider when the now Beverley trainer, Captain J. C. Storie, M.R.C.V.S., came up on his blind side to beat him on the post at Hexham. Captain Bewicke was furious, not so much at having been beaten, but at having been caught napping by a young man who was then only just commencing his Turf career. He was a very disgruntled man when he came into the weighing-room, and those of us who saw him throw his saddle down in the gentlemen-riders' room with mixed anger and disgust, were not surprised that he decided never to ride in public again. I may be wrong, but I think that Captain Bewicke was wearing such a high "choker" that he could not turn his head to see that Jim Storie had suddenly come up alongside him. He never realised the danger till it was too late, and could not forgive himself. Captain Bewicke was a fine horseman and made as few mistakes of this (or any other) kind as most men, though he perhaps blamed himself more, and took it more to heart than some of them. That is a matter of individual temperament! The Hexham incident to which I have referred was in 1910 in a Hunters' Flat Race, Capt. Bewicke riding Mr. F. Straker's good horse Herbert Vincent, and Capt. Storie being on his own Calliope. The betting was 7 to 1 on Mr. Straker's horse.

When John Powney trained for him at Grateley

Captain Bewicke was really consul of the stable which contained some useful horses owned by Captains Bewicke, Ball, "Atty" Creswell and the late Mr. G. A. Prentice. They won a lot of money when Little Eva carried off the Lincoln Handicap, and they brought off several other coups. For instance, there were Dumbarton Castle in the Stewards' Cup, and Stratton, the latter of which cleaned out one or two bookies. Regarding Dumbarton Castle Otto Madden was the jockey, and a contemporary writer said :

"There was no move to back Dumbarton Castle until the result of the draw was known, and when it was found that he was allotted a favourable position at the post, money was fairly shovelled on to him, with the result that he was backed down from 20 to 1 to fours, and then the commission was not exhausted."

There is no doubt that Captain Bewicke and his associates "had all their buttons on," and when the money was down immediate after events showed justification, even though matters did not always work out according to plan. In war and on the Turf it is the unexpected which often upsets schemes, the fruition of which seems a certainty. I fancy that poor "Atty" Creswell burned his fingers rather badly more than once when "good things came unstuck." His colours, black and heliotrope hoops, heliotrope sleeves and cap, were not seen on a race-course for many years prior to his death in 1921. He paid 5,100 guineas for Petty France as a yearling in one of his last attempts to get a good horse. She was a daughter of St. Simon, but I don't think she ever won him a race.

When the late Mr. Prentice sent his horses to Jarvis to be trained, Captain Bewicke returned to Northumberland and got together a stable at Belsay, famous in early Turf history as the *locale* of Sir Charles Monck's stud. With Captain Bewicke to the North came Hugh Powney as private trainer. The late Mr. Charles Perkins sent him some horses, as did Mr. Fred Straker of Angerton Hall, Morpeth (a lifelong friend of Captain Bewicke's). He had left Belsay for Newmarket when he had Mr. Straker's Blue Dun and View Law, the latter of which won the

1921 Lincoln Handicap. That was a good year for Mr. Straker, as he wound up the season by winning the Northumberland Plate with Hunt Law and the Manchester November with Blue Dun. Hugh Powney had remained in the North and became associated with Captain J. R. Renwick, who was just setting up as a public trainer. Powney went with him to Malton, but later followed Godfrey Miller at Hambleton and trained there for a while on his own behalf.

It was when Mr. Straker decided to materially reduce his racing establishment that Captain Bewicke determined to sell his house and stables at Newmarket, and to turn his back on a game in which he was for so long actively and successfully engaged. No one experienced more "the great uncertainty," or how essential it is to lay plans very carefully if anything like a haul is to be made. Incidentally, he knows as well as most that "the best-laid schemes, etc." In the days of his lightheartedness, and particularly when he was riding himself, Captain Bewicke was a joyous spirit—a *bon vivant*, full of practical jokes and laughter. Latterly he gave one the impression that he came racing only as a parade, or a duty, part of a routine which had lost most of the glamour which once surrounded it. Possibly he had become satiated, maybe he had lost a good deal of the energy which was his when the race-horse and race-course—perhaps also, the ring!—provided the very spice of life, and when those places were peopled by his friends. Many of them had passed on ere he said "good-bye" to racing.

Next in the list of trainers we come to genial, jovial, fat, good-natured Alf Bickley. He was one of the most amusing men I ever met racing, and one who often had a good story to tell about himself. I remember on the very last occasion I met him, he told some of us at Pontefract races that a day or two before in the paddock somewhere, a young lady had prodded him in his protruding stomach, and asked: "Does your mother know about this?" Alf was never really prominent so far as achievements of the Turf go, yet he was one of the best-known characters and was known and liked by everyone. He died about 1930.

Reference has already been made to William Binnie, the Malton trainer, who has probably now been at the game longer than any of those holding a licence to-day. Although he has spent practically all his life in Yorkshire, Binnie has never lost some of the outstanding characteristics of the Scotch, certainly he has never lost his affection for the homeland. I have always thought he was just about as clever a man as I ever met at the placing of horses and at knowing the exact moment when to put down the money. I don't think he's made any mistakes either, though his plans have sometimes been upset by accidents or incidents in the course of a race, or by jockeys not doing as they were told. Mr. Binnie told me only last year that when he fancied one of his horses and had the money down he had to *make* himself go to watch the race. It took an effort and was an inward battle, as the suspense and excitement take so much out of him.

Those who have known him as long as I have do not need to ask any questions when he expects to win a race, as he does not leave the weighing-room for an hour or so before the set time of the event in which he is particularly interested, and has an expression on his face which tells its own story. He is one of the old school of trainers who do not let their left hand know what their right hand is doing, which, after all, is a trainer's duty to himself and his patrons. He minds his own business and expects other people to do likewise. William Binnie was born in October, 1863, at Gullane, once the Newmarket of Scotland and the nursery of the Dawsons, P'Ansons and others. He was born into racing apart altogether from his environment, for his grandfather not only had scores of horses as a mail contractor in Scotland, but also had a few in training. You will find the name of Binnie in the *Racing Calendars* almost as far back as they go, and it is not likely to disappear for long, insomuch as "young Billie Binnie" is assisting his father at Malton as the fourth generation to be concerned with the Turf. Binnie's father was, as I have shown, keen on racing from being a boy and eventually went to Russley as secretary to Mr. Mathew Dawson, who had migrated from Gullane to Middleham for a brief spell, then to Lambourn, from



MR WM BINNIE AND C RINGSTEAD

there to Russley, and finally to Heath House, Newmarket. Born in racing stables, so to speak, in the January of 1820, Mathew died August 18th, 1898, in his seventy-eighth year, having spent three years in retirement. He trained six winners of the Derby, Thormanby, Kingcraft, Silvio, Melton, Ladas and Sir Visto—and one of the dead-heaters (Harvester) for the Derby of 1884. Five Oaks winners, six St. Leger winners, five winners of the Two Thousand, and five winners of the One Thousand were amongst his successes. He then, was the tutor in training mysteries of the present Mr. W. Binnie's father in the old days at Russley. Owing to a difference of opinion on matters far removed from racing, the late Mr. J. Binnie decided to leave Mathew Dawson and set up as trainer on his own behalf. So to Middleham, in 1880, he turned his steps, remembering that some of the Dawson family had migrated thither from Gullane long before.

He took what was known as "Brewer's Yard," but was soon disgusted with Middleham, and expressed the view that it was (in those days) the worst training ground in England. So one day he set off to look at Hambleton, whose gallops on not far distant hills he had so often seen from the top of Middleham Moor. He was impressed with Hambleton's miles and miles of wonderful turf—the best he had ever seen anywhere—but, when he found that all the water had to be carried from the bottom of the mountains, and realised the other drawbacks to altitude and solitude, he continued his journey to Malton. Here, he found Grove House—the old place, not the Grove House we know to-day—empty. These quarters—redolent with Turf history—he took and commenced a successful career there as a public trainer. Middleham Moor, by the way, has been wonderfully improved since this century came in owing to the constant care bestowed on it by Mr. M. D. Peacock. Binnie trained for Sir John Hay, Major Joicey, that greatest of all Northern amateur riders, the late Mr. Charlie Cunningham, Mr. John Craig and the Widgers. He had Wild Man from Borneo, which won the Grand National in 1895, and after whom a fox covert in the Middleton country is named. Mr. J. Widger rode the horse himself at Aintree and I

may here give a bit of hitherto unpublished history regarding the winner. I tell the tale as it was told to me by Mr. H. Gilberthorpe, a Birmingham butcher, who was born on the farm on which the old Rotherham race-course was situated. Here is his reminiscence :

“ At one of the Rotherham February meetings Wild Man from Borneo ran in a three mile 'chase. Mr. Maher (of Ireland), the owner, asked if he might leave the horse with us, as he was running in the Grand National in a few weeks. My father agreed and arranged for him to do work on the Rotherham course. I rode him in some of his work and unfortunately he caught a chill. The vet. wanted to wire to Mr. Maher that it would be impossible for his horse to run in the National, as he would be laid up for ten days at least. My father demurred, had a sheep killed and put the skin when yet hot over Wild Man's loins, kept him indoors for three days and on the fifth he was all right. The following week Mr. Joe Widger came to our place to see the horse, and my father advised him to give the £500 asked. Mr. Widger did so and told me, just before his death, it was the luckiest deal he ever made.

“ Wild Man from Borneo (ridden by Mr. Widger) in 1894 finished third to Why Not in the National, beaten a head for second place. That year Mr. Widger's horse started at 40 to 1. Next year, again ridden by his owner, he won the great Liverpool race by one and-a-half lengths, with Why Not nowhere. It is also interesting to mention that Wild Man before his National days, was entered for and won a jumping competition in a travelling circus at Waterford.”

Chatting a few years ago with Mr. Binnie, the present trainer, I remarked how strange it was that several experienced trainers like himself, born and bred into the game, knowing every move on the board, full of experience, and the soul of honour, only had a few horses in training, whereas comparatively new-comers to the Turf, who have neither bought, nor acquired, nor inherited experience of horses and courses, and the science of training and placing horses, get big strings. He told me that his father had told him never to “ tout ” for horses. “ If they want you as a trainer they'll come to *you*,” he used to say. “ But ” added the Malton trainer, “ that is hardly so to-day with so many young fellows at the game, who buttonhole a man who is bidding for a horse to ask

him to send it to them to train, even before he has got it bought." Mr. Binnie remarked that the ideal state for a trainer was to breed and train his own horses. This plan he had just put into practice when war broke out, and he found himself in possession of a number of brood mares and foals, but denied the corn to feed them on. In the merry past I hunted with Binnie and his beagles when Charlie Ringstead acted as whipper-in, and when Binnie was wont to call out: "Sit back, Charlie, and send your pony at it," when an "unavoidable leap" hove in sight. At Thirsk Races in 1935 Binnie told me that he thought he held a record on the Turf of having won fourteen races in one season with the same horse. This was Wrinkles, a bay horse by St. Jerome out of Marquina. Sam Darling ran him in a selling race and Binnie went up to 500 guineas to get him for his patron Mr. W. Brechin. As a five-year-old in 1892 Binnie ran Wrinkles first unplaced at Northampton. After that he ran in seventeen races, of which he won fourteen, and was placed on the remaining three occasions. Among his victories was a handicap at Newmarket, when he started favourite, won by three lengths and beat twenty other horses. At Scarborough he carried 11 st. 1 lb. and won by ten lengths. At Nottingham he carried 10 st. and won in a canter. Binnie added to this story: "You may not believe it, but there was a time when I got tired of winning races."

It did not occur to me at the time, but later I remembered that 'The Bard beat Wrinkles' record. So far as I know he is the only animal to do so. The Bard won sixteen races as a two-year-old, never being beaten in 1885.

Keen on painting, Binnie has a keen sense of humour, and a kindly manner, though he can rapidly squash anyone who is inclined to impertinence, or over-inquisitiveness. He has a strong, one might say a commanding personality, and whilst many trainers are "Bill" and "Jack" to all and sundry, Mr. Binnie is invariably "Mr. Binnie." He has always been careful of his associates and has never been hail-fellow-well-met with the flotsam and jetsam in the paddock. Some might even consider his

manner forbidding, but those who know him best, appreciate the warm heart under the somewhat cold and stern expression. At his home at Malton, he will show you a big silver medal presented by the Hawick Race Executive in 1873, to his father. He will also tell you that the old man used to say to his son: "That was a present for honesty—a thing *you'll* never get a reward for!" At this same ancient Border fixture (then under Rules) the late Mr. Binnie ran a horse called Wetherby in four races during the two days, winning the last of the quartette.

Quite a different type is George Blackwell. He is another who has been at the game a very long time, and who, in his hey-day, it was always like a tonic to meet. Fun and good nature seemed to radiate from him, and you could never tell from his manner whether he had a big thing on hand, or whether he was winning or losing. He always reminded me of the type of good sportsman described in the lines:

"A man who kept on playing when the sun was in eclipse,
A man who went on losing with a laugh upon his lips."

Blackwell was born at Cambridge so long ago as December 23rd, 1861, and "went through the mill." He was apprenticed to A. Gilbert, and when out of his time he went to mighty Mat. Dawson, who, on his retirement, assisted him to set up as a trainer, and got Lord Rosebery and Sir William Cooper to send him some horses. It was for Sir William that Blackwell trained his first winner, to wit Lover, which, in 1891, captured the Craven Stakes. Blackwell has entered three times for the marriage stakes, his present wife being a sister of Mrs. Bernard Carslake, whilst a former wife was a sister of Mr. Bob Colling's. The best horse he has ever trained was Rock Sand, with which in 1903, he won the "Triple Crown" for Sir James Miller. Two years previously he had won the One Thousand Guineas with Aida, and in 1905 he trained Pharisee to win the City and Suburban. That is a pretty fair record, but he rounded it off in 1923 by winning the Grand National with Sergeant Murphy. Not many trainers have trained both a Derby and National winner, the only exception being Dick Dawson. I should

imagine that George Blackwell has been associated in his time with as many big gambles on the Turf as most men, and quaint old Wallace Alderson¹ was one of those who made their fortunes over *coups* which Blackwell brought off. The latter had a rest from training for a while when some of his patrons died, but started again at the end of 1926. His memories of men and matters would be much more interesting than most of the volumes of Turf reminiscences which have been published, especially if he told *all* he knows. It was the late Lord Rossmore who called his book "Things I *can* Tell," and remarked it would have been much more interesting if he had related the things he *could* tell. This reminds me of another famous Turfite, who once replied to my suggestion that he should put his racing recollections on paper. "If I did" he said, "half of your race officials and others connected with the game would be warned off—so should I."

Another of the old school is "Sandy" Braime. H. Braime, of Burbage, Wilts, was training before my day, and the fact that he had some of the most astute owners who have ever been on the Turf as patrons is testimony to his ability. He came a good deal into the limelight in 1905 when he won the Royal Hunt Cup with Andover. I remember having him pointed out as a man who had successfully engineered one of the best "good things" for many years. Andover had not won before that year, and he didn't win again. His starting-price at Ascot was 10 to 1. He was ridden by Barrington Lynham, and carried 8 st. in the race in which he beat Pharisee which, ridden by Maher, had 8 st. 11 lb. in the saddle, and Dean Swift, the mount of Randall, whose impost was 7 st. 11 lb. The result was by no means unexpected by those in Braime's confidence and they had backed Mr. F. Alexander's four-year-old for pounds, shillings and pence. In those days the Royal Hunt Cup was one of the big gambling events of the year. There were 24 runners for the 1905 race, and amongst them was Mr. L. F. Craven's Sir Daniel, a three-year-old with only 6 st. 8 lb. to carry. He had only run twice before that year, and was

¹ Died 1932 aged seventy-nine. Went racing regularly to the end.

then unplaced as he was at Ascot and in all his subsequent races during the season. Yet he started a hot favourite at 9 to 4 against, Whitechapel being next in demand at 9 to 1, Andover being third favourite, his price as has already been stated being 10 to 1. Joe Plant rode Sir Daniel, and after the race the Stewards of the Jockey Club tried to solve the mystery. They had Sir Daniel's owner before them, but he could give no information as to who had made his colt favourite, or why he was so much in demand. His explanation of the previous running of the horse, and his running that day, was accepted, and there the matter ended. The Braime party could easily have explained why and where the money came from for their horse, and why they had such confidence in Andover, for he had been tried a certainty, and for once a trial didn't get out. Braime has never had another Andover, though he did well with Hot Bun in 1929, and still occasionally springs surprises. He is comparatively little known to the present generation of racing men, never having courted publicity, indeed, like some one could mention, he has rather avoided than thrown himself in the way of the travelling Turf race reporters, who are mainly responsible for making Turf "idols." He is a retiring man who calls a spade a spade, and leaves no doubt in the minds of those to whom he is speaking what his views and wishes are, that is if he desires either or both to be known.

CHAPTER VII

MORE FAMOUS TRAINERS

IT was always an unfailing delight to meet the late Joseph Butters. He struck me as being like a Dickens character, and to the end was neat, trim, quick, courteous and most interesting. He was one of the last links with the great epoch of famous John Scott of Whitewall, Malton, with whom he was apprentice. Born at Knowsley, Lancs, on October 20th, 1847, it was Lord Derby's grandfather who suggested that he should become a jockey. Those were the days when racing men boasted that they "bred jockeys on their estates." They saw likely boys on ponies, watched them with hounds, or at country feasts and sports, and then either took them into their own stables (for many of them trained their horses at home) or sent them to a trainer. Joe Butters did not ride his first winner till 1863, his indentures having been transferred to James Waugh, whose daughter he subsequently married. Later he went to Mat. Dawson at the time when Fred Archer was beginning his career. In 1873 he went to Austria and became one of the leading jockeys there. Eventually he trained in that country, having as patrons Baron N. de Rothschild, Baron G. Springer, that prince of good sportsmen, Count Kinsky and Mr. A. Baltazzi. Not till 1903 did he return to England to take over the late Prince Soltykoff's horses. Many were the races he won for him, but he could never win an English classic. He died December 19th, 1933, at the age of eighty-six, having retired from training in 1926. One of the memories which stands out clearest in my mind is that of Mr. James Melrose, so long chairman of York Race Committee, calling me up to join a most remarkable group in the paddock at York. It was

just at the entrance to the Owners' and Trainers' stand, and with him were John Osborne and Joseph Butters. I knew all three well, they were each over eighty, and were men who had forgotten more than most of us will ever know about racing, yet humble-minded, charming characters, benevolent in appearance, and possessing sweet natures, so different to the conception of those who imagine all those connected with racing to be rough, vulgar, loud and boorish, if not rogues and vagabonds. It was Sir Abe Bailey whom I once heard say in a York Gimcrack Dinner speech : " I don't say that all those who go racing are rogues and vagabonds ; but I *do* say that all rogues and vagabonds seem to go racing." The late Mr. Butters was the father of Frank and Fred Butters, the former of whom is one of the most successful trainers of the present generation.

Sam Darling, who died in 1921, was one of the greatest trainers and most talked of men in my early days ; certainly his achievements had justified this. Apart, however, from the great horses he had under his care, and the important races he had won, his very name aroused a wealth of Turf memories to those who knew their Turf history. Somehow I don't think the present generation have half the interest in the story of the past we had. They don't read *The Druid*, and are much keener on what is going to win to-morrow than in men and matters of the past. Old Sam Darling could reel off the names of the winners of the Derby and the St. Leger for years past and tell you interesting stories of the jockeys and owners concerned. I have heard him do it and I know others of his generation who had equally retentive memories. To write the history of the Darlings would be almost to write the history of the Turf for a century. So long ago as 1833 the great-grandfather of the present S. and F. Darling rode the St. Leger winner Rockingham. He also was Sam Darling. The Sam who retired just before the War was a man of striking personality and appearance. He had a strong face, a firm mouth, an aristocratic nose, and might well have been mistaken for a judge or a barrister. I remember when I was first introduced to him I was rather over-awed, not merely

because I felt I was taking the hand of a wonderful man, but also because he seemed to look through me with his piercing eyes as though he was reckoning up my form. I felt the inferiority complex badly, for young men in those days recognised and respected their superiors in age, experience, knowledge and attainments. Now they "know it all" in a few weeks and are quite prepared to criticise and offer advice to trainers and jockeys who have been years at the game. Sam Darling wrote his reminiscences in 1914 in which he told us his grandmother was a Bethell, one of the same family as Lord Westbury. He concluded his book with the confession that after handing over the stable to his son Fred, with all the attendant worries, he felt twenty years younger. The late Sam Darling's name was honourably connected with the Turf for many years, and stands out most prominently in the history of 1897 when Galtee More, trained by him, won the triple crown for Mr. J. Gubbins. For the same owner, five years later, he won the Derby again with Ard Patrick (a half-brother of Galtee More). In 1898 Sam won the St. Leger with Wildfowler, which horse Darling owned in partnership with Captain Greer, in whose name he ran. Three years later Cap and Bells was sent out from Beckhampton to win the Oaks for Mr. Foxhall Keene, whilst in 1907 Captain Greer's Slieve Gallion won the Two Thousand Guineas. Another good horse—what a galaxy he had—Darling trained was the late Charlie Howard's Willonyx. As a four-year-old Willonyx won the Chester Cup, Ascot Stakes and Ascot Cup, and set a seal on his fame by winning the Cesarewitch, with 9 st. 7 lb., the highest weight ever carried successfully in this race. Darling bought the horse for £700 after he had been through the ring at Doncaster, and passed him on to Mr. Howard, who gave him the Ascot Cup and replicas of the other trophies. Darling more than once spoke to me in most affectionate terms of Willonyx. His face softened when he did so, and I really think he thought more about him than any animal he ever had in his stable. "He is a perfect gentleman, one of the kindest horses I ever knew," he once said to me.

His son Fred, who was second in the list of successful

trainers in 1931, has well maintained the wonderful reputation of Beckhampton. He commenced training in this country in 1903, his first important winner being Yentoi with which he won the 1908 Cesarewitch for Lady de Bathe (Mrs. Langtry, "the Jersey Lily"). Prior to this he had trained successfully for two years in Germany, during which period horses from his stable won £56,000 in stakes. When he took over from his father in 1913 he had as stable patrons such pillars of the Turf as Lord Woolavington, Lord and Lady Lonsdale, the Duke of Portland, Mr. J. A. Dewar and others. In 1926 he won more stakes than any other trainer, viz., £63,095. This achievement was sandwiched between the years in which he occupied second and third positions with £43,613 and £34,219 respectively. Fred Darling established a post-War record by sending out four Derby winners between 1922-31, the quartette being Captain Cuttle (Lord Woolavington, 1922), Manna (Mr. H. E. Morris, 1925), Coronach (Lord Woolavington, 1926) and Cameronian (Mr. J. A. Dewar, 1931). Coronach also won the Eclipse Stakes, and both Manna and Cameronian carried off the Two Thousand Guineas. Another useful horse which he trained for the late Lord Dewar was Abbot's Speed, which won the Kempton Park Jubilee Handicap and the Duke of York Stakes.

Was there such a rough diamond, such a character, anyone less like the job, so far as appearances go, holding a trainer's licence than quaint old John Dent? He was a butcher, and he also manufactured and sold some sort of salve and horse medicine, and was the owner of a half-bred chestnut mare, called Lucy II. She was out of his mare Lucy by Galloping Lad, and was trained at Oak Tree, near Darlington. When she ran, John Dent's brother always led her round the paddock. Like John he was a very big man, and I don't think he ever wore a collar. I recall him walking round the paddock ring, looking rather like a Viking, whilst John, in a very greasy, wide-brimmed, black, deer-stalker hat, held forth on her merits and appearance at the ring-side. Well do I remember the excitement and cheers for the owner when Lucy II won at Stockton, a month or two later at Gos-

forth Park, and later the same summer at Haydock. I happened to be near John when a Newmarket trainer asked him how much he would take for her after she had won one of her races. "Tak for her!" repeated Dent, "All t'money i' Ingerland wadn't buy her efther what sha's deean ti daay." John Dent was one of those men who were perpetual humorists, always sought after by those who wanted a laugh, no respecter of persons, candidly outspoken, which lack of restraint was sometimes more amusing and forcible than tactful or cultured. The old man died in 1923 at Middlesbrough, and with him went a type which belonged to another age.

Well do I remember when quiet, gentle Miles P'Anson was clerk of most of the courses in the North. There were not so many runners in those days, and if any races looked like filling badly an appeal to brother William or to William Elsey at Baumber would always help matters out. The Hornbys, who controlled the Stockton meeting for many years, also relied upon Elsey to make their card up if certain events threatened to cut up. William Elsey was a power to reckon with in those days. A little, alert, business-like man, William was a cut above many of the trainers of his day. He was an educated man and one of substance, so never had the need to descend to some of the not very straight or sportsmanlike actions which circumstances sometimes compelled others to adopt. There was nothing small, petty, or mean about him, and he had the reputation for being as straight as a die. Still, William Elsey was not a man to stand and be shot at, and when he turned, as he sometimes did, he could retaliate to some purpose. He had a big stable of horses, and was not one to keep them to look at. Indeed, it used to be said that he trained them on the railway lines travelling from meeting to meeting. Certainly those that were sound horses did not eat the bread of idleness, and they seemed to go on winning too, though he was never lucky enough to have a real "smasher" under his charge. It was the same with breeding. He could never breed a really good one, and gave up in 1893 when he started training. For some years he had been farming, breeding bloodstock and hunting from his home near

Horncastle. His friend, ally and first patron, Mr. Taylor Sharpe, another well-known Lincolnshire breeder, was largely responsible for Elsey commencing to train, and it was for Mr. Sharpe, in the following year, he turned out his most important winner—Ella Tweed in the Brocklesby Stakes. Mr. Sharpe for many years had a large stud at Baumber, but latterly lived at Newmarket. He had horses with Elsey and quaint old Martin Gurry, and will always be remembered as the breeder of Galopin, the 1875 Derby winner. Galopin had an almost unbeaten Turf record, and both Elsey and Sharpe were never tired of talking of him. I knew Mr. Taylor Sharpe well and have sometimes heard people out of sheer wickedness express a doubt in his hearing that Galopin was not by Vedette. He never failed to rise to the bait with vigour. As the doubt is sometimes expressed even to-day it may be interesting to go off at a tangent to quote a letter written by Mr. Sharpe on the subject some years prior to his death, which occurred at the end of 1911. Here is his letter :

“ It is all moonshine as to Delight being the sire of Galopin. I bought Delight the year before I bought Flying Duchess, in foal to Vedette ; and during that interesting and profitable occupation of manufacturing Galopin, Delight was never within sixty miles of Flying Duchess.

It is a great pity, I think, that in this racing world of ours there are so many who believe in nothing, enjoy nothing, revel in nothing that is not mysterious, improbable or dishonest.

They did not know Delight as well as I did, or they would certainly have never credited him with the ability to sire so good a horse and father of a line of kings-to-be as Galopin was and is. I had Delight and Suffolk as sires at the same time, and the young Delights could make rings round the young Suffolks, and I recommended all my friends to buy the Delights, to the great loss of their money and my reputation, for every Suffolk won a race of some sort, but not one Delight ever won a race of any description. They could go like lightning for three furlongs, but no further. Mr. Thomas Jennings was the only one I ever heard of who bred a winner by him, and she was a little chestnut filly selling plater.

As a fact, more of his stock were chestnuts than any other colour. Who ever heard of St. Simon, Galopin, Vedette or

Voltigeur siring a chestnut? They must be very rare occurrences. I never heard of even one."

Now to revert to the late Mr. Elsey. He had a wonderful knack of placing moderate horses, and was for long one of the most successful Northern trainers, indeed in 1904, 1905 and 1906 he turned out more winners on the flat than any other trainer. In 1904 with 40 horses, he won 79 races, Elijah Wheatley riding most of the winners. The best horse Elsey ever had was Lord Edward II, though Catty Crag was useful and was spoken of as a certainty for the 1905 Lincolnshire Handicap in which he was beaten a head by F. Luscombe's Sansovino, who was giving 15 lb.

The late Mr. Elsey gave up training in 1911, and died at Baumber in his sixty-seventh year in the February of 1922. His most painstaking, courteous and pleasant-mannered son, Captain Charles Elsey, succeeded him. Possessed of eyes with a good deal of humour in them, and a most expressive face, Charlie Elsey is a purposeful man, quite able to hold his own in experience, and knowledge, or quick repartee with any of his Turf contemporaries. He was born December 10th, 1881, and whilst his elder brother, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Elsey, was predestined for the Church, Charlie was very early in life on a pony determined to ride in races. Whilst his brother was studying theology and the lives of the early fathers of the Church, Charlie was studying Beckford and hunting a pack of beagles of his own.

This reminds me of a perfectly true story of another Bishop who was the guest of a local squire when preaching at a country church. On the Sunday morning when the maid took him his early cup of tea he asked her to bring him a Testament. The girl obliged according to her light, but on being handed the leather-backed volume the Bishop remarked, "*This is a Racing Calendar!*" "Well, it's what the Squire reads on a Sunday," replied the girl.

Charlie Elsey was bred, born and reared in an atmosphere of bloodstock and sport. It was entirely congenial, and it was somehow fitting that the first winner he trained should be at Beverley, at which ancient meeting

his father had won so many races. Wireworm was Charlie's first, and I can recall now the congratulations he received. Then came the War and Captain Elsey joined up at once, and at the end of hostilities commenced farming at Baumber. When the extensive holding was sold he commenced to train again and went to Clyde House, Ayr. He won his share of races when in Scotland, including the Ayr Gold Cup with Westmead. Then Highfield at Malton—the nursery of so many P'Anson triumphs—came into the market, and he left the sands of Ayr for Langton Wold. Other patrons soon came his way, amongst them the Duke of Portland and Mr. H. F. Clayton, who had had horses at Highfield before Captain Elsey was born. Additional boxes soon had to be built, and had it been the old days at Malton the church bells would have been set-a-ringing when, in 1931, he won the Cambridgeshire for the late Mr. H. F. Clayton with Disarmament. As it was there was much local rejoicing, and would have been more had Six Wheeler, owned by the same good sportsman, carried off the Cesarewitch the same year instead of being second. There were hopes in 1933 that he might add to the list of Derby winners trained at Malton by capturing the great Epsom race with Major Clive Behrens' Light Sussex, bred by owner at Swinton Grange, near Malton, where everything is pedigree. Well as the colt ran at Epsom it was not to be. He won the Great Northern Leger (a race now discontinued) at Stockton in August, and spent the winter at his owner's place, coming up big and fresh for 1934 when the City and Suburban fell to him, whilst at York a few weeks later he captured the Flying Dutchman handicap carrying 9 st. 3 lb. It was many years prior to those triumphs of Charlie Elsey that Malton had had a horse with classic pretensions there, though in the days of the Scotts there were frequent Derby, Oaks, Leger and Guineas winners prepared on Langton Wold.

Going back to my starting-point, though still remaining at Malton, poor Jim Fagan was training in 1904. As was the case with Tom Bruckshaw and other jockeys who turned trainer, what they had saved in riding fees and presents went in training horses for patrons who didn't



CAPT CHARLES ELSEY AND DISARMAMENT

still remain and there is an annual 'flapping' meeting of sorts there some time about St. Mark's day. 'There were sharp turns on the Morpeth course,' he said, 'but it was quite as good a track as that on the Town Moor at Newcastle and infinitely better than the Paisley, where I rode many winners.' He added that the last meeting under rules at Morpeth was in 1883 and he rode at it. He said that one of the best jockeys he ever rode against was Jim Snowden, who was just as good when he was tight (as he often was) as when sober. 'A lot of jockeys in my early days,' said Jim Fagan, 'used to take a fair drop of drink but I always kept away from the bottle, so did John Osborne. He spoke of Mr. Charles Perkins' Dare Devil as one of the best and most generous horses he had ever ridden and almost sadly of Chittabob on which he quite thought he was going to win the Derby in Donovan's year, till Chittabob broke down in his preparation. He was also owned by Mr. Perkins. Chittabob according to Fagan made 'mince-meat' of Donovan at Manchester, but Mr. Perkins' horse always had an 'if,' about his legs. 'William I'Anson was a bit severe in his training methods. I rode Chittabob in his races and all his work and it wasn't my place to speak. When I won on him at Newcastle in 1888, Ernest Benzon, 'the Jubilee Plunger,' was making the ring sit up. Mr. Benzon got the cream of the market and won about £10,000 over Chittabob that day at Newcastle. I fancy he stayed at a country house in Northumberland that night and that some of the house party, who were a bit nettled at the 'Plunger' having stepped in before them in the ring, got most of the £10,000 from him at baccarat. He told me next day that he had meant to make me a nice present but that all his winnings had gone. He was a foolish young man and everyone seemed to treat him as a 'mug.' In many ways he was, and so have a lot more of us been with the money we have had."

Fagan was born at Knutsford in 1855, and to within a very short time before his death at the age of seventy-seven, in 1932, he continued the long walks of his jockey days. To the end he remained a dapper, neat, placid little man, though one could discern a touch of sadness in his face. There was the mark of disappointment, of sorrow, rather than a feeling that life had treated him badly. The last time I saw him was when he came to a meeting at Thirsk. We brought him into the weighing-room, and his quick eyes swept round it as though he

were standing in the dock awaiting his trial. He was obviously ill at ease. I asked him if he would like to look into the jockeys' dressing-room and a pathetic smile flickered across his face. "No thank you," he replied. "There's not a soul there I know and not one who even knows me by sight or name. I think I'll go out." I asked him why he didn't come oftener to renew his friendships with those still at the game whom he *did* remember and who remembered him. "Well, you see," he half-whispered, "I'm on the Bentinck Memorial Fund and it wouldn't look well if I was going about racing. Apart from that I'm out of touch with everybody and everything: I'm a back number. Practically all my old pals are gone." Fagan went at the age of fifteen to Thomas Dawson and when out of his time, William I'Anson was very anxious to get him, but he went to Fred Bates at Middleham. After a season or two there, however, Mr. Charles Perkins secured him for the I'Anson stable, and between 1879 and 1890 he rode 650 winners.

The Malton stable raked in a pot of money over Dare Devil, when he captured the Chester Cup in 1892. He won very easily by five lengths, Colonel North's Colorado (M. Cannon), which was an odds on favourite, being nowhere. The following year Mr. Perkins and party netted even more when Dare Devil won the same race. In the year 1895 Dare Devil was second in the Chester Cup to Kilsallaghan. Prior to the 1892 victory, my old friend, the late Tom Connor, had taken over Mr. Perkins' horses from I'Anson. The latter trainer was quite plainly told he must either train for Perkins or Peter Buchanan, and as he declined to get rid of his Scotch patron, Mr. Perkins sent his horses to Connor at Beverley till such time as the gallops, which were being laid down at Gallowhill, near Morpeth, were ready.

Although Fagan never won a classic he probably would have done so had he accepted one of the several offers made to him to go South. He frankly admitted that he didn't like the South, and was always glad when he was coming back to the North Countree. Of course, he won a number of important races—the Ascot Stakes

in 1890 and 1891 on Lord Lorne and Houndsditch, the Royal Hunt Cup in 1896 on the late Lord Rosebery's Quarrel, one or two Northumberland Plates and the Ebor Handicap on Ben Alder in 1884. He relinquished his licence in 1903 and gave a lot of money for Grove House, Malton; spent a considerable sum in building a new house and stabling, and a few years later sold the lot for only £2500.

One of the most interesting men I ever met on the Turf was Martin Gurry, who died on December 20th, 1923, at the age of eighty-one. I think he took to me, at any rate he had abundant patience to gratify my curiosity regarding great men and horses of the past. Few men knew more than he did about both, few could tell so much or draw on their memories with such a wealth of detail. He was liked by everyone, for even when he was satirical it was satire with humour rather than bitterness in it. Here are some extracts from my diary regarding him :

" Ascot 1910 : Martin Gurry came up smiling and wheezing and said he always liked to shake hands with anyone from Yorkshire. He told me he was well except for 'this awful asthma which plays the devil with me.' We walked over to watch some horses being saddled and he made some amusing remarks about what he described as 'those kid-glove trainers.' 'You'd think,' he said, 'they'd never picked up a bit of horse muck, or sponged a horse's dock out in their lives. Some of 'em never have. I like men who've been through the mill and know the game from start to finish—that is if we ever do know it as far as that. If some of 'em had had to go through what I had to go through they'd never have become trainers, they'd have hooked it from stables after a week. I went when I was about twelve to William Oates, who trained at Middleham. He'd been a jockey and thought far more about his horses than his lads. But that was the way in those days. Lads in stables had a roughish time and had to fick for themselves. They didn't get much to eat, they got a good deal of stick, and there were no recreation rooms, mess-rooms and all the comforts provided for them that there now are. I didn't get any wages and there was no bed for me. I slept with the stable dog for a good bit when I first went to Middleham, and washed at the pump in the Manor House yard, as did most

of the other lads. I had better quarters when I went to Watson at Richmond but it wasn't all beer and skittles there. We were at it from morning till night strapping horses, cleaning "tack"—all steel in those days—and horses were given a lot more work. If a lad came off he was certain to be well "coshed" and if one took his hook he was brought back and things made hot for him. It amuses me to see these kid-glove trainers after what I've gone through.'"

Martin Gurry was head lad with Robert Peck at Russley when he had Bend Or, and later became private trainer for the wealthy but very foolish Mr. "Abington" Baird, at Bedford Lodge, Newmarket. For him he won the Derby of 1887 with Merry Hampton. Here is another conversation I had with Gurry as recorded in my diary in 1911:

"I travelled from York with Martin Gurry who bought a sporting paper at the book-stall though he can neither read nor write. I had asked him some time before if he would give me an old letter from Mr. Baird to add to my collection and he had one for me in his pocket. 'There you are!' he said. 'It's from one of the biggest fools who ever went racing. I could never stand all the riff-raff he had round him. He preferred the scallywags of the boxing world, ex-jockeys and such like round him to gentlemen. I've know him leave us all to go to the end of a train to get into a horse-box with stable-lads who were playing cards. That was him all over. I used to tell him a man was judged by the company he kept, but all he would say was "they amuse me." They didn't amuse me and I could see that they were all out for Mr. Baird's blood. They got it too! I was too straight for him both with my tongue and every other way and wouldn't have some of his pals about the stables. I couldn't stand their bad language and their dirty tales and I didn't mince matters. It came to a head after I had given him a piece of my mind one day and he wanted to take all his horses away at once. I'd done well for him and though I wasn't really sorry to part with him I made him stick to his contract and pay up. He went through nearly two millions, so they say, during his short time on the Turf but it wasn't all gambling. A good part of it went to the suckers and hangers-on he always had round him.'"

Gurry only trained another classic winner, that being La Sagesse in the 1895 Oaks, for Sir James Miller. He

gave up training in 1917 and went in more for blood-stock breeding and farming. He had greater successes with his pedigree cattle and sheep than with the thorough-breds produced at his stud. Martin Gurry was one of nature's gentlemen, illiterate as he was, he had a broad, sane and shrewd outlook on men and matters. Moreover, he was as excellent a judge of human nature as he was of a horse, and his descriptions of both men and animals were often as amusing as they were pointed. He was the first man I ever heard use the expression: "I never push myself an inch forward, but I take d——d good care no one pushes me an inch back." Being a religious man, he didn't often swear, but on this occasion he did. He was furious at a gratuitous snub given by a youth, who with all his breeding, wealth and education wasn't fit to black Gurry's boots. He had a thoughtful face, usually a twinkle in his eye, was well-groomed without being "loud" in his dress, and had a peculiar habit of standing in front of people for a few seconds and staring hard at them before he spoke. He seemed to "reckon up their form," then suit his words to his diagnosis, often making what he himself called "a droll remark." He had a remarkable memory, and rarely ever said anything unkind about anyone. When he sold his home, Abington Place, at Newmarket to Mr. Sadler, it was agreed that he was to remain in the house as long as he lived.

The name of William P'Anson is written pretty conspicuously on the pages of Turf history of thirty years ago. He trained more winners on the flat than any other man alive, or dead, though he was no horseman himself, and was very severe in his training methods. Yet he won races with several horses which were never really sound. Martin Gurry hardly ever had a bet on his own horses and wagered very little on anyone else's. William P'Anson betted heavily. Indeed, he told me that his father said to him: "William! my advice to you is *don't* bet, but if you *do* bet—then BET!" It was nothing unusual for him to have a thousand on a horse he fancied, and I should imagine that when he retired from training he was more than quits with the ring. He had his wins and his losses like everyone else, and finished up with figures



III IAI MR MARTIN GURRY

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adding up satisfactorily. This is more than most men do. Once or twice he just missed winning a fortune and to the end felt rather injured at Fate having denied him those plums which seemed ripe enough to drop into his hands. Once he thought he had been "done" by a jockey, on the other occasions it was merely bad luck. I met him in the paddock at York in the summer of 1933, the year before he died. He was almost blind, but otherwise little altered. He carried himself well, he had his customary cigar alight, and when I asked him how he was he replied: "physically fit, but financially b——". Things weren't as bad as that really, though since he had retired from training he had had many calls upon his savings. William I'Anson looked more like a prosperous farmer than a trainer. Neither about him or his brother Miles was there the slightest trace or suggestion of "horsiness." There are, as I have said, some men who carry in their faces a something which stamps them as being connected with horses. There are others who assume this by sartorial veneer. The I'Anson brothers neither dressed nor looked "horsey"! Yet they were more closely associated with the race-horse and the Turf than most men. Moreover they were born into the game, it was inherent in them, and though both Miles and William began life in channels far removed from either bloodstock or racing, they both found they had something in their blood which called them back to Malton, to Langton Wold, to training and breeding race-horses, and to managing race-horses. Both brothers in their respective spheres led most active lives and became prominent figures in the world of sport. William I'Anson was born at Gullane in 1846 and died suddenly at Scarborough, on returning from church, on April 30th, 1934. He had been living at Scarborough for some years, spending a good deal of time on the bowling green and at the Conservative club. His wife's death in 1932 was a severe blow to him, and I don't think he ever quite recovered from it, for particularly in his later days, when old friends had gone, when the excitement and change the race-course brought him had all gone, he relied more and more upon her company to fill up the tremendous

gap which came into his life. I do not think his latter years were particularly happy ones. He had so many regrets and private sorrows, and I know nursed a feeling that Fate had not been kind to him, also that he had missed golden opportunities, and had not, even in his last days, the peace of mind he had hoped for and expected. I was a good deal in his confidence and knew his disappointments, his longing for affection. William was sent to Pontefract to school, and it was on the ancient course there that he saw his first race. His father persuaded him not to go in for a Turf career, and articed him to a timber merchant at Sunderland. He "stuck it," as he put it, for five years and then had two years with Sir James Gowans, a famous Scotch contractor and bridge builder, but in 1869 he told Sir James that he wasn't cut out for a business career and wanted to be back at Malton amongst horses. "Very well," replied Sir James, "then I'll be your first patron, though I know nothing about racing." The Scotch bridge builder forthwith bought three horses and with these William I'Anson commenced his long and brilliant career at Malton. He had known Queen Mary, Blink Bonny, Caller Ou, and other equine giants, which founded his father's Blink Bonny stud, and laid the foundation of the family fortunes. William set out to emulate the traditions built up by his father, and, if he had not the same classic successes, he certainly made racing history. I have already written a book about William and his family—*Malton Memories and I'Anson Triumphs*, so will now devote myself to the personality of the man who for so long was a familiar figure wherever racing men foregathered. Here is an extract from my 1908 diary :

"Cesarewitch Day. William I'Anson was a very sad man in the paddock both before and after the race. It is always easy to tell when things are going right with him and when they are not. To-day they had all gone wrong. He had fancied Mondamin for the Cesarewitch but his hopes fell to zero when the horse bolted out at exercise and not only galloped the course but up the hard road through Newmarket. This was the worst thing that could have happened for Mondamin was a bad-legged animal, and when William bought

him at the December sales last year he was told he would not stand a canter. As a rule I'Anson takes defeat philosophically as being all in the game but to-day he was a shaken, unnerved, disappointed man and one could not but feel sorry for him for he had set his heart on winning the Cesarewitch and had prided himself on getting Mondamin so fit and well. He had not run him at all this year with the big Newmarket race in view and even the comfort Mr. H. F. Clayton so generously gave him did not seem to quieten his mind or soothe him. Mondamin was not placed, Lady de Bathe's Yentoi winning easily. After the race F. Fox, who rode the winner, was engaged to ride Mondamin in the Derby Cup."

"Derby, November 1908: William I'Anson was full of jubilation. Mondamin won the cup by a good length. He started at 100 to 8. I'Anson was hopeful but wondered if it would be far enough. I was struck to-day as I have been before at his cleverness in 'reading' a race and gauging how much horses have left in them. He has a very short neck which seems to be entirely lost in the old-fashioned butterfly collars he always wears and when he is intent on watching a race he seems to force his chin further into his collar. I watched him do this to-day, and then heard him say 'He's won it now!' Fox had just 'niggled' at Mondamin and the gelding moved up. Knowing his horse—as William always seems to know his—the response was sufficient. His cheery little patron, Mr. H. F. Clayton, was one of the first to come up and congratulate I'Anson who replied 'I wish it had been t'other,' meaning the Cesarewitch."

The only classic I'Anson won was the Oaks in 1880 with Jennie Howlett. In 1906 he won the Cesarewitch with Mintagon. The last important winner he trained was Rathlea, successful in the 1909 Newbury Autumn Handicap, second for the Derby Gold Cup and Manchester November Handicap, and winner in 1910 of the Liverpool Spring Cup and the Great Northern Handicap at York. I'Anson always considered the last-named race one of the best he ever saw. Danny Maher on Rathlea beat Foy on Moorland Lad (receiving 13 lbs.) by the shortest of heads. In 1912 I'Anson retired from training. He had let Highfield in 1908 to the late Sir John Thursby and had gone to Wold Cottage. When I left the army I went through to Malton and spent an evening with I'Anson and again turn to my diary for recorded impressions:

"November, 1920: Bob Robson and I had a night at Malton with William I'Anson. He himself said he was as full of fun and devilment as ever he was. He certainly looked it and we had a great night of happy memories. He told us he had been asked to take up training again during the war but the difficulty of getting forage and the uncertainty as to whether meetings would be held quenched the old fire of enthusiasm which for a moment leaped up. He said many things of interest of which I made a note at the time. One was that thoroughbreds have neither the legs nor the stamina they had fifty or sixty years ago. Another was 'I never had a really good horse which hadn't an "if" about its legs.' Again, 'I never bought a bad or unprofitable horse out of a selling race.' 'There's as much art in placing horses as in training them.' 'I was always a great believer in bleeding gross horses.' 'I always found it was too much corn which made daft cheeky horses, though sometimes horses' tempers were ruined by lads who plagued and teased them, which made them sour and awkward to deal with.' 'I never believed in the clock trials. I've known some trainers who relied on it but found they were hopelessly misled and gave it up. The mistake of home trials is that boys are often put up, and they go hell for leather all the way. That's what makes trials at home wrong. I always had jockeys up and put something that was speedy enough to go like the very devil, and then get out of the way when it had done its job. On the whole I found home trials work out very well.' William is still keen on bowls and talked a good deal about the happy days he had curling. He was one of the best men in England at that game and once took a team abroad. He showed me some curling medals he had on his watch-chain. He has one or two interesting oil-paintings of famous horses but has given all his *Racing Calendars* to the landlady at the Talbot Hotel at Malton, where he and others meet nightly to fight their battles over again. He plays a good game of billiards, still keeps a cigar or two in his outside breast pocket, has a wonderfully accurate memory for events and pedigrees and is altogether a most likeable man, though he struck me as being very much less dogmatic than he used to be a few years ago when he was in the full swim of things and perhaps considered himself—as others considered him, and as he was—an important person on the Turf. I have often heard him spoken of as one of the best judges of a yearling who ever stood by the ringside at Doncaster or elsewhere. He gave me the impression of feeling aggrieved that his financial position was not better than it is and that his expectations had not been realised. I am to write



THE LATE MR WM P'ANSON

a book on his life and the horses which have been under his charge."

Such are some of the impressions recorded at the time William I'Anson, whom I met several times after at Scarborough and at York Races—the only meeting at which he put in an appearance after he had retired.

"I think we'll spend £5 and change his name after to-day. We can never call him 'Cock of the North' again." It was "Little George Kennedy," who spoke thus. We were travelling back together from some race-meeting at which Tommy Thatcher had been riding, and George Kennedy and Billy Cooper (a York tobacconist, who in his younger days had, I believe, been in Mr. Vyner's stables) had been running horses. Kennedy and party had backed "Cock of the North," which had sadly belied his name and he sat back in the carriage with his hat crammed further on his head than usual, a disappointed and disgruntled man, though even when things were "going bad" he couldn't help being funny. I recall—and it is strange how some things are stored up in the mind for over a quarter of a century—Cooper telling us how he had cured Iman of a "ricked" back by getting the skin of a sheep from a butcher whilst it was still warm and clapping it on to the 'chaser's loins. The method is one recommended by some of the earliest writers on the horse and "lahtle George" agreed as to its efficacy. He told us Watson of Belleisle, Richmond, with whom he was apprenticed, swore by the pelt of a newly killed sheep for a chill, for anything wrong with a horse's kidneys, or a strained back, and that Teddy Weever did the same. Here is what I wrote in my diary many years afterwards :

"Sedgefield, 1929. George Kennedy came into the weighing-room to see me. I had not come across him for many years. He was walking with the aid of a stick and told me he had just retired to Sedgefield as he had got too lame to continue assisting Hartigan in the South. He trained for Tommy Edge before going to Hartigan after the war. Kennedy always amused me when he was training at Richmond and many miles have we travelled together. He was trainer for some time

at Croxdale for the late Capt. J. E. Rogerson and left him to go to Scotland to train for Mr. Cairns, after this he had a few horses at Sedgefield using the gallops Marquis Talon had years ago. His chief patron then was Mr. W. Brown, a Hartlepool stevedore, who had a son who became a jumping jockey with Tom Coulthwaite, and was badly smashed up when riding at Perth. Brown later had horses with the Casebournes, both when they were at Picton and Middleham. From Sedgefield, Kennedy went back to Richmond where he had been in stables as a lad. He was a good stableman and had 'Suttie' Vaux as stable jockey and head man. Sir Henry Lawson sent him Galloper, but he never had many horses and I should imagine Galloper and Iman were about his best. The last named was at one time owned by Sir J. Backhouse, one of the very first Quakers ever to run a race-horse. Kennedy reminded me of some incidents in the merry past and brought back old days and old times, when he and old Jim Stobie kept the Turf fires at Richmond at any rate smouldering. They once on a time burned very brightly but that was before my day, though both Kennedy and Stobie have told me of the brave doings of yore at Richmond when every box contained a race-horse and when Richmond races—despite a very bad track—were very popular. 'I couldn't somehow bear to go back there now I'm out of everything,' said Kennedy to me to-day. 'I knew Richmond when it was so different and when I was in the swim of things. No! I couldn't go there to end my days.'"

The end wasn't very far off for Kennedy died at Sedgefield a few weeks after we had our chat.

"You never know what's won till the numbers go up—and not always *then*." It was poor Herbert Lines whom I first heard use this expression. One of his horses won a race by a short head and as soon as the jockeys had got into the weighing-room, "Objection" was shouted. Herbert lost the race. He was always rather a pathetic figure with his big sad eyes, and had always to be careful owing to T.B., which eventually carried him off on April 4th, 1927, when only in his prime. He won a lot of races with platers, two of the best horses he ever had being African Star and Cornsheaf. The latter was second in the 1916 Cesarewitch. Lines was born at Harrow in 1875, his father being well known in the hunter dealing

world. Herbert once told me that he began his racing career by riding point-to-point winners as have done so many others. He trained at Clandon in Surrey for twenty years, but went to Newmarket in 1913. It was there, of course, he had game Old Tay Bridge, a horse of which he always spoke with great affection. Lines was a most particular man about feeding and took endless interest in his horses, both at home and when away at meetings. He was always one of the first to arrive at race stables to see his prospective runners had "cleaned up" and to feel their legs. Like many other men who have spent their lives amongst horses he invariably "hissed" and "sissed" no matter what he was doing to any of his charges—saddling, putting on a rug, or feeling their legs. He was a very practical man and loved working amongst horses. I have seen him look with amused contempt at some young men who "knew it all in five minutes," then give a broad wink at their dogmatic assertions, but speak never a word. One remark he made to me I have never forgotten, so did it impress me, and so true have I found it since. It was this:

"Horses which are called thieves and rogues are often animals which are being run out of their distance, or have some ailment. I've never called a horse 'a dog' since one I thought a rogue because he 'chucked it' in one or two races, dropped down dead with a bad heart."

Mr. Wilfrid Lyde, who now trains at Thorngill, Middleham, is one of the many hunting men who have come to the Turf via the chase. I fancy it was his close association with Mr. Gerald Armstrong when they were both serving in the Lancers during the War, which decided him to make racing a career rather than a hobby. When the piping days of peace came, Mr. Lyde, who had done (and still does) a lot of hunting in Herts with the Old Berkeley and other packs, settled down at Middleham to learn the science and routine of training with the Armstrongs. He had a few rides as an amateur under National Hunt Rules and on the flat and won a lot of point-to-point races. When he commenced training on his own behalf in 1932 one of his first patrons was his friend Captain S. G. R. Barratt, the Master of the

O.B. Hunt, whose hunting stables are about the best appointed in England. Lyde saddled his first winner at Haydock, a couple of weeks or so after he had received his licence, and has done very well since. He is keenest on the jumping game, as one would expect, and at the Sedgefield meeting on Boxing Day, 1934, had the distinction of turning out three winners. A very modest young man and possessed of a charming personality, he is very popular and, unlike some "gentlemen trainers," a real hard worker. He will make his mark on the Turf for he has been amongst horses all his life, is a good stableman, and makes a study of the constitution and character of every animal under his charge.

The late John McCall of Dunbar was always a neat, well-groomed, rather exclusive and much respected little man. It was unfortunate that after the War he did not wait till things got going again and really sound patrons came along. He was in too big a hurry to get horses into his boxes without considering whether one type of patron would frighten others away. I know one very prominent Turf official who begged of him to bide his time, but he didn't, with the result that in his latter years he had only very few horses under his charge. He felt this. Indeed, he expressed himself rather bitterly about it to me and also about the decline of racing generally in Scotland. He said that the only panacea was to have more horses trained over the Border, to run at Hamilton Park, Lanark, Ayr, Edinburgh and Bogside. It is the paucity of runners at some of these Scotch fixtures which results in racing appealing less to the crowd than greyhound-racing, which is so much less expensive; though Mr. Oswald Barclay, who has done much for racing in Scotland, says: "Scotch people don't expect big fields, they've never been used to them." The Scotch meetings rely largely upon Yorkshire-trained horses and when the expense of taking horses and lads from Malton, Ripon, Middleham and Doncaster is reckoned up, it will be seen that it is a deterrent. Dunbar is handy for the Scotch circuit and at one time John McCall had a nice string there. He had the sands to train on no matter how dry the summer, or how hard the winter, but latterly, as I

have said, he had few horses under his care. He was very quiet, retiring, never seemed to be ruffled; a very temperate man, shrewd, trustworthy, and despite the disappointments which came into his life, never seemed to look a day older till seized with a stroke. He was born at Kelso in 1859, and died at the end of 1931. When he was in the Yeomanry as a lad to rode the winner of a hurdle race at Dunbar, and this was his Turf inoculation

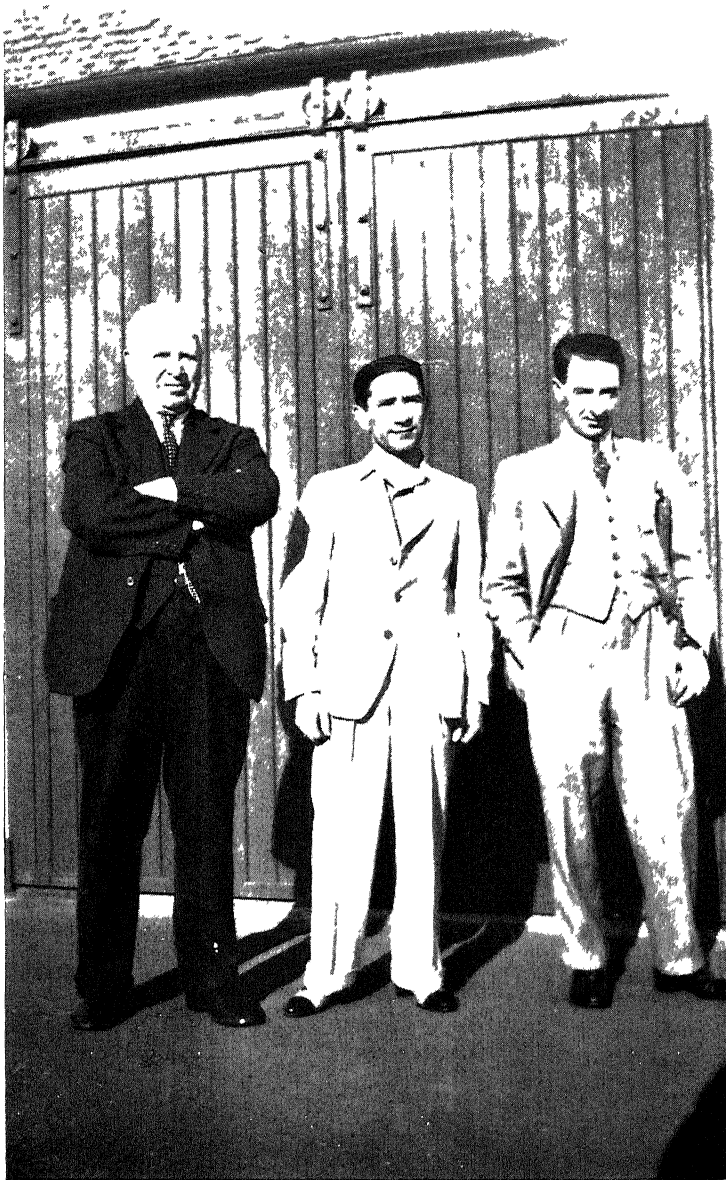
At twenty-five he commenced to train race-horses, switching over, as Harry Hall had done, from greyhounds. His first training ground was the Park at Edinburgh, and it was when the authorities put an end to galloping there that he went to Dunbar. In the meantime he had trained himself to win the Powderhall Handicap under the name of "J. Hill." He turned out many winners in his day and in 1923 sprang a surprise on everyone by winning the Lincolnshire Handicap with White Bud, an animal which was afterwards "in the news." She was only the seventh mare to win the race in its long history and John McCall made no secret of his expectation that she would carry off Lincoln honours to those to whom he could open his mind. He was not one to talk much and never one to think his ducks were swans, but was confident that no animal would go to the post fitter than White Bud. Nevertheless, she started at 66 to 1. She was owned by Mr. J. C. Dingley, a Glasgow bookmaker.

Big-hearted, quick-tempered, Johnny McGuigan has already been mentioned in connection with his son Davy. The Ayr trainer has had a more important string to his bow than training—that of exporting bloodstock abroad. Still no one who knows anything about the game will deny that J. McGuigan is as clever as any of his contemporaries at getting the most out of horses and placing them just when and where they should be placed. He has been connected with racing a long time and has a wonderful memory for events and people both in this country and in foreign parts. The soul of honour, he is a firm friend who never forgets a kindly action and is the first to put his hand into his pocket for any good cause, particularly in the case of a sportsman who is down and

out. He has from time to time shown me letters from tipsters, men in gaol, Turfites in the workhouse, or penniless in some lodging house. They knew how to touch the heart of the sympathetic Ayr trainer, and never appealed in vain. I remember once asking him for ten shillings or a pound for the dependents of a jockey who had been killed. He then told me he had sent a tenner anonymously as soon as the fund was opened. And so it was! and such generosity is typical of him. He is a consistent Roman Catholic, and at the present time, whilst he has one son a jockey, he has another being educated for the priesthood. John McGuigan is in many things a character, an individualist with strong likes and dislikes. Once a man has done what he considers unsporting or unfair he not only crosses his name off his book, but lets him know the fact in plain broad Scotch. He has no further use for him.

John McGuigan (and don't call him McGiggan) was born amongst horses, for his father kept livery stables. He says that his first connection with the Turf was when he backed Quicklime, the winner of the 1884 City and Suburban, and won £33. He then felt that he was one of the richest men in Scotland and that he would never want money again. Quicklime, which did not win another race that season, was owned by Lord Bradford, and started at 20 to 1. On Ebor day the following year he was short of funds so pawned a watch given him by his father and put the proceeds on Lord Cadogan's Mate, which, with Archer in the saddle, won the Ebor at 8 to 1. John McGuigan began to train in 1894, so he has had forty years at the game. The first winner he trained was Gartness (ridden by Seth Chandley) on the old course at Ayr, on September 21st, 1894. On the same afternoon his wife presented him with a daughter.

He had married Miss Scullion, whose father was a successful owner in the days when flapping, pony racing and trotting were popular in the North. Racing continued on the old Ayr track for another twelve years and McGuigan won many more races on this ancient course ere it was closed down on September 20th, 1906.



(Left to right) MR. JOHN McGUIGAN, W. CHRISTIE AND D McGUIGAN

He has always trained under both rules and has turned out some useful jockeys under both codes, his present steeplechase jockey, Jack Lynn—an Irish lad whose father is still riding—having become his son-in-law in 1932. I should say that John McGuigan is a sterling friend, undesirable to have as an enemy. Let me hasten to add that whilst he has a host of friends he has few enemies. One wishes that he had scores of horses in training at Ayr instead of only a few, for there is no more knowledgeable, painstaking or astute man in the profession he has so long followed.

The Manser family have been long connected with racing and have been so prominent and so popular, that they were on intimate terms with almost everyone of note on the Turf of the past (and greatest) generation. Their Newmarket house was a sort of rendezvous—a club—at which famous men met, talked, ate, made matches and often stayed. It is a strange thing that after successful careers in the saddle and with such a family reputation behind them that the present Manser brothers should be so much on the shelf whilst other trainers, minus their tremendous experience, should have their boxes full of horses. There is George Manser at Beverley without a horse, yet he is one of the cleverest trainers on the Turf to-day—a man who was born into the game, who has had wide experience in many countries, who is a cultured man of many parts, as straight as a die, and a clever vet. in addition to his other accomplishments, which include music. It is past the wit of man to understand why such men and their proved ability are not used.

Is it that public memory is short? That the new generation of owners know nothing of the past, or that they follow each other like sheep to stables which are in the limelight? I cannot explain it. I can only regret, as I have said before, that so many of “the little men” are really the men who have forgotten more than some of to-day’s fashionable trainers know. The late W. H. Manser trained at Cadland House, Newmarket, where John William Manser is still living. It was here that Sir John Astley (“The Mate”) arrived one day and

told his father he couldn't pay his subscription at the Rooms.

He was invited to stay the night and stayed for eight years ! I have for years known George Henry Beaumont Manser very intimately. A most amusing and entertaining man he is, too, with a fund of stories, and a wealth of interesting memories regarding men, horses and matters, who and which helped to make Turf history. You'd never take him for anything else than what he is—a horsey man and a horseman. He learned to ride on *The Liberator*, winner of the 1897 Grand National, which Garrett Moore (who owned and piloted the horse at Aintree) gave to his father. Unfortunately one of George's brothers staked the horse so badly when jumping a big place with the Newmarket Drag that the old favourite had to be destroyed. George, in the course of many chats, has told me a good deal regarding his career which is of quite sufficient interest to epitomise.

He raced a great deal abroad, training in many countries, and with great success in Spain for Mr. Velasco. One of his best horses in Spain was *Don Quixote* which won every important race in the country. George Manser rode over fences as well as on the flat, having his first retainer from Mat. Dawson. Before dealing in detail with the later life of George Manser, I propose to tell a little of the story of the once prominent Turf family to which he belongs. The father, W. H. Manser, was the son of the keeper of Kings Mills. Possessed of an adventurous spirit he, as a youth, ran away from home and apprenticed himself to Drewitt, at that time a famous trainer. In the early 'sixties he sought fresh fields and pastures new by emigrating to the land of the Czar where he trained for H.I.M. Alexander II, the Emperor of that period. While in Russia he won every race of any importance, including the Wilma Challenge Cup which went to a horse owned by Count Tolstoi. It was here that he also found a bride, Miss Wilson, an only daughter of General Wilson. After five years amidst the snows of Russia he migrated to the suns of Egypt in which country he became trainer to H.R.H. Ishmail Pasha. The Egyptian owners of Arabian horses were then under the impression that that breed

had no superiors on the race-course, but Manser disillusioned them by coming over to his native country and purchasing English horses which made hacks of the Arabs.

It was in 1871 that he came back to England for good, having purchased Cadland House from which establishment he sent out many winners. Among the many useful horses, which won races under both codes, which he had in his stable at various times was Eastern Empress, which in a match at Turf headquarters beat Lowlander by nearly a distance. In one week with Ridetto (named after a one-legged dancer) Manser won three nurseries, being the first trainer to accomplish this feat. Like McGuigan, previously referred to, Manser did a big trade in the export of bloodstock to all parts of the world. On one memorable occasion he shipped 175 horses to America on the *Naronic*, which on her very next voyage sank. He made a bad bargain when shipping over £5000 worth of race-horses to South America, the money for which was paid into an American bank which collapsed, Manser's money being lost in the *débâcle*. His eventful life of eighty-five years was brought to a close in 1921. George Manser had his first ride in public in 1888 and in the race he not only claimed "the five," but also a further two pounds for the double bridle he used.

Shortly after his *début* as a jockey his father purchased from that astute Turfite, Captain Machell, a hard puller named Whitechapel. The first time Whitechapel ran for his new owner he was ridden by J. Robinson with whom he bolted. In his next race "young George" was given the leg up and Whitechapel not only provided him with his first winning mount, but also beat a presumed certainty in the ownership of the erstwhile owner of Whitechapel. Then followed the retainer from famous old Mat. Dawson; this placed Manser amongst a galaxy of both human and equine Turf stars. Amongst his contemporaries associated with the stable were Fred Archer, Tom Cannon senior, Jack Watts (who won so many races in the Royal livery), Fred Webb, George and Fred Barrett. Almost one of the very first horses he

rode in a gallop was Ladas, the first of the trio to win the Derby for the late Lord Rosebery. In the next year he rode Sir Visto, Lord Rosebery's second and successive Derby winner in his trial, S. Loates having the mount in the race. George went first to ride abroad in France for M. de Ribaucourt (a Belgian owner), in which country he had three rides and three wins. For some time he crossed regularly to Belgium and Ireland to ride. In 1893 he had a trip to America, where he rode for the Duke of Beaufort in the World's Fair Derby at Chicago.

Not only were the horses kept at the post for one hour and fifty-five minutes, the native "jocks" getting down and sitting on a fence, but when the race *did* actually start, they saw to it that Manser and the Duke's horse had no chance—an incident for which the American sporting writers were profuse in their condemnation and apologies.

In addition to the sporting notabilities Manser met "across the pond" were W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) and the Sioux chieftain Sitting Bull. From America George went to Ireland where for some time he rode 'chasing. In another chapter I have dealt with the subject of presents made to jockeys and it may come as something in the nature of a shock to those who imagine that every owner opens his purse strings when he has a winner, to learn that Manser received the princely tip of £10 for riding five winners for one owner. George Manser had his first trip to Russia on the occasion of the visit to this country of the late Emperor of Russia. That great sportsman, the late Prince Soltykoff, who was the first Russian to be elected a member of the English Jockey Club, presented the Czar with a black thoroughbred stallion. Manser *père*, who had, as has been stated, lived in Russia for many years, was selected to deliver the stallion and at the same time was entrusted with secret dispatches to Russia. The Government, however, decided he was too old to carry out the responsible task and when the stallion was shipped from Hull it was under the charge of George Manser. Later, during the suspension of W. Warne he rode for the Graditz stud in Germany.

Nearly forty years ago he again went abroad, this time to South Africa. He rode there for Alec Myburgh, taking with him Thurling, Sevellanus, Cherry Wood and the pony Fifi. He was in Johannesburg when Woolf Joel was shot, and among the celebrities he met over there were Paul Kruger and the Boer general De Wett. He had the offer of a big retainer to remain in South Africa, but as Myburgh would not release him from his engagement to ride in England at the end of the South African trip, he returned to his homeland. When war broke out he joined the colours and after three years' service he was invalided out. Mr. A. E. Barton was at that time seeking a trainer and George was recommended for the post by his father. Neither party allowed grass to grow under their feet, for that very day George Manser entered the employment of Mr. Barton at a salary of £200 per annum, supplemented by the odds to £5 per winner, a clause in the agreement drawn up preventing the trainer from "either betting or divulging the stable intentions."

Manser had his establishment at Warren House, Newmarket, and his new position positively bristled with difficulties. He took over at a period when there was an acute "man shortage" and as he had upwards of thirty yearlings in his boxes he was dependent upon the good natured assistance of his brother trainers who "loaned" him their lads when their own morning stables were completed. Eventually he succeeded in getting a few permanent lads and Elijah Wheatley as stable jockey. In the March of 1918 he tried fifteen yearlings and within a week of "asking them the question" he had sold ten into Belgium for sums ranging from £5 to £10 each. Quaint old Tom Green, who for so long trained at Beverley and Hambleton, used to say that before he tried his yearlings, money would not buy them, but after they *had* been tried he would be "glad to sell many of them for two penn'orth of gin." So it was with Manser, who wisely thought that the first loss was the best. From J. Dawson's stable to that of Manser came Earna which won races for him. Manser is still of the opinion that had not the mare run a fortnight before,

beating in the race such good class performers as Hainault and Irish Elegance, she would have won the Cambridgeshire. Manser is an adept at placing horses, and equally knowing as to when a horse is fit and when to put the money down. This fact was brought forcibly home to the ring when Green Fruit and Irish King won races.

In due course Manser took over the horses of Sir Alec Black, the trawler owner. These included Cygnus, Jack Role, Roi Hero and last but by no means least, the notorious The Panther. The latter was just recovering from coughing and it was some time before he was tried. Joe Childs had the mount on this horse, which was destined to achieve much limelight if not fame. Herbert Toon rode Jack Role, Joe Childs The Panther, the trainer being up on Earna, Cygnus and Roi Hero also taking part. As Earna, Jack Role and Roi Hero all had winning form, Manser certainly had something reliable with which to tell the time of day. Apropos the trial Manser told me the following story :

"What happened to The Panther I don't know, but Jack Role beat him easily. About three days later I galloped them again with the exception of Earna. This time I rode Cygnus and Cooper rode The Panther. The trial was on the galloping and not the trial ground, so it was not reported as a trial. After going six furlongs there were only two in it, The Panther and Cygnus. At seven furlongs I told Cooper to go on and he beat me easily, the other two being a long way behind. I was satisfied and wrote Sir Alec Black that The Panther would win the Two Thousand Guineas which he did. He was then considered to be a good thing for the Derby and was never left day or night. A man slept in a room opposite his box and a policeman patrolled the yard so there was no chance of his being 'got at.' He continued to do well up to going to Epsom a week before the race. So anxious was Sir Alec to win the race that he even sent money to tip the driver of the train in which The Panther travelled not to jolt it. I took Jack Role for company for The Panther, and I rode the horse myself to Walter Nightingall's place. After he had been 'done' a lad sat outside the door of his box till night-stable time and another policeman patrolled the yard. Jim Bradford (the brother of Walter the jockey) 'did' The Panther

and Kempton Cannon remained up with me all night. He was in charge of Paper Money for his brother Tom. It was, therefore, impossible for The Panther to be got at. As to the foolish apple story, The Panther was one of the few horses which would not eat apples. On the morning of the race. The Panther was well and had cleaned up his manger. We started for the course an hour before the race. Jack Role walked in front, I rode The Panther, Bradford leading him with my head-man, a blacksmith, and police to guard him. Lord Lonsdale joined me in the parade ring and said how well the horse looked. Cooper was as white as a sheet and nervy. I wanted Childs to ride, he having had experience in big races, but the owner said, 'I've told Cooper to ride and ride he *will*.' So that ended it—and me. After the race the horse was not distressed and ate a big mash, travelled home next day and was given a clean bill of health by the vet—so much for the alleged 'nobbling' stories and stories of doping. Anyone is welcome to Derby favourites to train. I don't want any more. Telephones, wires, letters, Press and public enquiries day and night. No bed till midnight, up by 5 a.m. and no sleep for anxiety when in bed."

It was following this Derby disappointment that Manser went to Spain in which country the fickle goddess of fortune smiled upon him once more. With his very first runner he won the Spanish Two Thousand Guineas. At Barcelona he won upwards of thirty races including the Derby, Grand Prix and other important events. His patrons in Spain were Baron Velasco and the Marquess Villamejon, and on one memorable afternoon he saddled five winners of the six races constituting the card. The Marquess having passed away, and mainly as a result of racing having been cut down to eighteen days per annum, Manser once more returned to the old country.

Having dealt at some length with the career of George Manser I will confine myself to briefly stating that he had three brother jockeys—Jack and Charlie, who were riding in England at the same time, and Rollie, who rode with distinction in South Africa where he met with a bad accident. Not less unfortunate was brother Charles, who won the Queen's Prize for Lord Rothschild on Harlcot, and who was badly injured at Derby, where a dog brought down his mount during the course of a race.

For years now Mr. Daniel Macnee and I have never met without having a laugh and joke. He has a quiet humour which relieves the tenseness and sometimes rather wearying routine of racing. We began our racing careers about the same time. To be quite accurate Mr. Macnee had a year start of me on the Turf, for in 1903 he bought a colt by the hot Perigord, named Devil's Truffle, and had the proverbial beginner's luck, his first horse winning him three races. Mr. Macnee was born at Uppingham and was to have gone in for engineering, but horses appealed to him more than wheels, and to the hunting field and racecourse he went rather than into a draughtsman's office or the engineering shops. His father was keen on horse-flesh, breeding back to some sporting strain, which is bound to come out sooner or later. There doesn't seem much connection between the two professions, or interests, but D. Macnee's grandfather was Sir D. Macnee, President of the Scottish Academy, and a famous portrait painter. In his early days Macnee trained at Aston, in Berks, and after the war seemed to drop out of things, but in 1928 began again at Lambourn. He has a dry humour and quiet manner till he is roused, then he can make things "hum." Everybody likes him, and he is acknowledged on all hands to know his job without continually emphasising or advertising the fact as some blusterers are apt to do. Whilst such as these talk, Macnee listens—I have often seen an amused twinkle in his eye as he does so—and when he does add a word or two it is often to the confusion of the rather self-satisfied and bumptious. At Aston Tirrold he was followed by Major Morris, who retired from training in 1932, and died in August, 1934. Major Morris was quite a different type to Mr. Macnee. He did not, somehow, win one's affections so quickly, one did not see faces light up with pleasure on his approach, as is always the case with the always well-groomed, always pleasant, Daniel. Morris married the only daughter of the late Richard Croker, and came to England in 1905. He had done a lot of racing and had played polo a lot in India, and began to ride here as an amateur, steering his first winner at Lewes the year he came to this country, his mount being Joe Miller.

Though he had some influential patrons, Morris never seemed to have the luck to get hold of a really good horse. Undoubtedly the best he ever had under his charge was Fiz Yama. He bought Fiz Yama for the modest sum of 150 guineas at the Dublin Sales, and for Mr. C. Wadia the horse won the 1913 Cesarewitch, the Alexandra Stakes, 1914, and in 1915 won the Great Metropolitan. Incidentally Fiz Yama was the last horse to win the "Met" after the outbreak of war, and the race was not again run until the year 1919.

I don't suppose many of the present generation will recall Matthews, who trained at Ripon so long for that prince of good sportsmen, the late Mr. R. C. Vyner. He used to tell me that he was much handicapped in his duties by reason of the gallops which Mr. Vyner had laid down becoming so hard in the summer. Sometimes he would take the string over the fields to Farnham to gallop on Mr. R. I. Robson's good turf. Robson, by the way, trained Mr. Vyner's jumpers. Matthews was born in 1847, so he was no chicken when I knew him. He had for years been with Mat. Dawson at Newmarket, and was, of course, with him when Mr. Vyner had Minting at Heath House, and when there was all the sensation regarding the "nobbling" of Minting. When Mr. Vyner, in 1891, decided to have his horses at his home at Newby, near Ripon, so that he could have the pleasure of seeing them at work, it was Matthews he selected as trainer. Mr. Vyner, however, reserved a good deal of the management of his horses to himself, and more than once Matthews remarked to me: "I could win a lot more races for Mr. Vyner if he would let me waken some of these horses up. No matter how sluggish or lazy they are, no lad is allowed to carry a 'cosh,' or give them a reminder or two to set them alight." He was a delightful old man who knew his place and never presumed, and never lost his old-fashioned respectful manner, which is rather at a discount in these days when Jack is as good as his master. He was a very sick man at the end of 1912, and we were told that the end might come any day. However, when the news came through from Redcar that Mr. Vyner's Marco Bozarris and Fabian's Way had both won,

he said he "wasn't going ti dee yet." It certainly acted as a tonic and he picked up for a while. The end came, however, on his birthday, in 1913, and Mr. Vyner lost a faithful, honest servant, whilst many of us lost a valued friend. His son took an inn at Ripon and for some years was assistant secretary to the local race meeting.

Just before I left Hambleton, Mr. Godfrey Miller arrived there to train. He was then a temperamental man and we had practically no contact, which was strange amongst sportsmen. Major Miller, as he is now, has off and on been owning, training and concerned with other branches of the Turf for thirty years. He was born in 1872, educated at Eton, and came into prominence in 1904 when he won the Ascot Stakes with Merry Andrew, a horse he bought for 80 guineas and trained at Liddington, Wilts. It was in 1910 he went to Hambleton, in Yorkshire, and there trained for Mr. J. L. Dugdale, Mr. C. Joliffe and others. In 1934 he succeeded J. Rhodes, who for some time had been assistant to Captain Gooch.

I remember many interesting things about Major Miller when he was in Yorkshire. He lived at the top of the Hambleton Hills, nearly three miles from a telegraph office, and, as he acted as his own "tout" for the sporting papers, he had telegrams to despatch every day. Not wanting to send a messenger down to the distant village of Sutton-under-the-white-stone-cliffe below the hills, for this purpose, he got a friend in London to wire him every morning before lunch.

The telegram contained possibly one meaningless word, but it brought the telegraph boy on his pony up the mountain, and back went the wires the trainer had to send. I recall, too, what when Hull races were revived (they had a very short existence) Miller won a £1000 seller with Faithful Don. He was a very reserved man, and Captain Gooch's stable secrets will be quite safe with him.

CHAPTER VIII

OSBORNE, PEACOCK, RENWICK, ROBSON AND OTHERS

OF the late Mr. John Osborne I have already spoken. I was privileged to know him better than most racing men of my generation. I travelled many miles with him, stayed at the same hotels, visited him in his home, and on several occasions "rode out" with him on Middleham Moor. He was one of my first mentors on the Turf and no young man could have had a better. Pure in mind, thought and action, he was practically a teetotaller, he had no use for any story which left a nasty taste in the mouth, he loathed immorality and I have seen a look of mixed horror and disgust on his face when men have spoken boastfully of their feminine conquests. John hated betting beyond a few shillings "just to have an interest," and he had no use for those who turned night into day, though he did occasionally go to a theatre when away from home for the night. Here is an extract from my diary of long ago :

"Carlisle, 1906: Travelled with Mr. John Osborne to Carlisle and on his advice booked a room at a temperance hotel. He said he always stayed there; that it was 'clean, quiet and cheap.' It was certainly cheap but only the pleasure of having his company would make me go there again. What is it about temperance hotels which make them beastly and always to have the odour of yesterday's meals about? At night I told Mr. Osborne that Alec Hurley was performing at the theatre and asked him if he would go. He replied that he would be in bed by nine o'clock and rarely went to theatres or sat up late as he had things to attend to early in the morning. 'Those who turn night into day and spend the evening rowing on are no use in the morning. Half the jockeys of to-day look washed out and weary when they come into the weighing-room before racing. I was never one who went in for these wild

nights, and most of those who do don't last long.' He had a very light supper—nothing but some fish, and went quietly off to bed almost immediately afterwards. Before supper he took me to the Swifts to look at the old course there. He seems to think it is a pity they have transferred racing a couple of miles out of the City to Blackhall, or, as they call it locally, Bleckell. Before racing on the following day he had several calls to make as he seems to have a number of old friends in the City. We set off in good time and walked to the course, Mr. Osborne saying, 'I always walk. It does you good and what's more I've seen a lot of those who ride up in cabs and landaus find that they *have* to walk. You can't travel about to race meetings without spending money but there's no sense in throwing it away foolishly. I never see any good comes of wasting money on champagne and drink, and I have never smoked. Mind, I like the smell of a good cigar and have no objection to others enjoying their smoke but it's no good for jockeys. It spoils their wind, and neither horses nor jockeys are much good if they're touched in their wind.'

"Then he went on to say it was a mistake to have a race-course so far away from the City and that a lot of the old Carlisle standards were so annoyed at the change that they swore never to set foot on Blackhall.

" 'I remember,' he said, 'when they used to have a lot of wrestling after the racing here. You ought to read what "The Druid" says about it. I knew him, and a perfect gentleman he always was. Carlisle would be his native place and he loved The Swifts. I often rode there and had some rare tussles on that track and in 1891 rode two dead-heats in one afternoon there. My old friend Harry Custance tells all about it in his book.'

"So Mr. Osborne chatted away till we reached the course, and I was sorry when the walk came to an end."

The incident to which he referred is thus recorded by Custance in his *Riding Recollections* (page 136):

"I started him in three races at Carlisle on a very hot day in forty minutes, and he rode one winner and two dead-heats. This takes a bit of reckoning up and also beating. I will explain how it was done. Lodore and Dissenter ran a dead-heat on the last day for the last race but one, and everyone was anxious to catch the train; so we got permission from the Stewards to run the deciding heat directly after the last race, and there was only thirty minutes between the last two, the

decider came off ten minutes afterwards, with the same result. These were the only two horses I said I would ever undertake to handicap, as I never saw two so close together. Chandley made the running the first time, and I thought he had just got up and Johnny made the running the last time, and I thought Chandley had got up; but of course the judge in the box is the only man who can tell on such occasions, especially when horses are running a bit wide. I think this version quite sufficient to prove my argument that my old friend John was anything but worn out, as many people tried to make out."

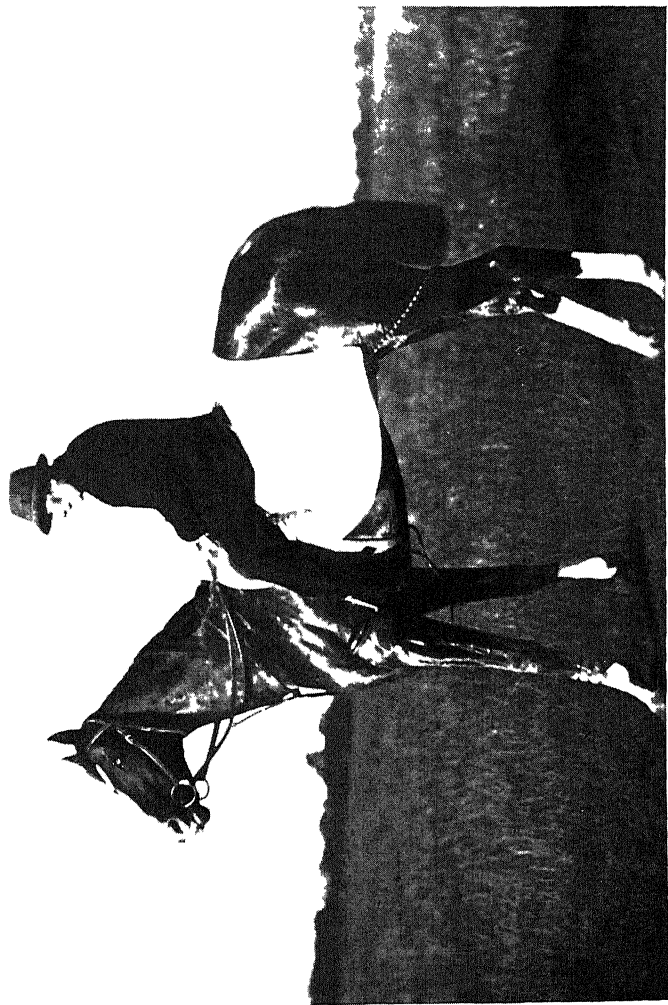
John was certainly not worn out many years after this, or indeed at the end, for he was at full grips with things, and till within less than a year of his death, rode "work" on Middleham Moor. It was only the determination of his family that prevented him from continuing to do so. He latterly bowed to their wishes by riding a pony rather than a blood 'un. I had written thus far when I had to lay down my pen to set out for Catterick 1935 Spring meeting. There I had a chat with Mr. Fred Osborne, who has one or two horses at Middleham. Fred rode for a number of years without ever attaining the distinction of his father. He has just the same quiet, retiring manner as the dear old man who died on September 10th, 1922—Leger week. This is what I wrote at the time:

"York Races, August, 1922: Had a long talk with John Osborne who got me to read the numbers for him off the board and mark his card, as he now sees so badly. Dobson Peacock, who is always most attentive to the dear old man, and looks after him with all the attention of a son, usually does this. 'Mr. John' looked well and said he felt so. He asked me if I still had the old colour bag he once gave me, which he took with him when he won the Derby on Pretender—the last Derby winner to be trained in the North. I told him I valued it almost as much as the whip and spurs used by J. Charlton when he won the Derby for the I'Ansons on Blink Bonny and that it was amongst my treasured racing trophies."

"Doncaster Leger meeting, 1922: I got a wire from Sir Edward Hulton asking me to write my memories of poor John Osborne (whose death cast quite a gloom over the meeting) for one of his papers. Here is an extract from what I wrote:

" 'I shall see you at Doncaster,' were 'Mr. John's' parting

words in the paddock at York the other day. Now he is dead! I am writing from Doncaster and many of our hearts and thoughts have been away in that peaceful little churchyard in lovely Wensleydale, below Middleham Moor gallops, where has been laid to rest, full of years and full of honour, the tired body of that quaint, quiet, great old man, whom all the world and his wife affectionately knew as 'Johnnie Osborne'—the once famous jockey. There, within hearing almost of the fall of the hoofs on the ages old turf upon which he rode so many horses, under the shadow of the everlasting hills he loved so well, sleeps that gentle, lovable old man against whom, during his long career as jockey, owner and trainer, never one word of scandal, breath of suspicion or suggestion of mean or 'sharp' practice has even been breathed. Few men pass through a long Turf career without (rightly or wrongly) making enemies, and having the finger of obloquy pointed at them. Mr. John Osborne was the exception. He was born at Bretby on January 7th, 1833 and was therefore in his ninetieth year. His father had been intimately concerned with the thoroughbred and racing, and in 1846 John began his wonderful riding career which lasted till 1892, during which he rode the winners of one Derby, two St. Legers, six Two Thousand Guineas, one Oaks and two One Thousand Guineas. His first mount in public was on a filly named Miss Castling belonging to his father in 1846, at the Radcliffe Bridge meeting, long defunct. His last mount was on Llanthony for the Forty-fourth Triennial Stakes at Newmarket, September 28th, 1892, and not on Watercress in the Leger of the same year, as so many writers have stated. The late 'Middleham Wizard' told me more than once that his patron of so many years standing—Sir Robert Jardine—was most anxious that his final mount on a race-track should be a winning one, and so put him up on what was considered 'a certainty.' However, Johnny Watts beat him by two lengths on Mr. Henry Milner's Adoration. John Osborne has more than once told me that he considered Exact (the Gimcrack winner of 1852) the best of the hundreds of horses he rode. The filly belonged to his father and was by Birdcatcher out of Equitation, a sister of Euclid. I never lost an opportunity of sitting (so to speak) at the old man's feet, whether it be when hunting with the Bedale hounds, travelling to race meetings, or in the paddock, where on occasion he asked me to help him to saddle one of his runners. I was as pleased and honoured at such requests as though the King had commanded me. I can hear John saying 'keep your hand firm on the top of the saddle. I like



THE LATE MR JOHN OSBORNE, RIDING THE GULLER AT EXERCISE ON THE MORNING
OF THE 1914 NORTHUMBERLAND PLATE WHICH HE WON

the saddle well forward, and if there's anything I hate it's any shouting or fuss to unsettle horses when they're being saddled.' I once wrote down in my diary some words of wisdom he gave me and they made such an impression I can quote them without reference to the entry. They were these:

" 'It pays best in the long run to go straight—those who try to be clever at racing usually beat themselves in the end; and those who make money by underhand ways never have any real satisfaction from it and rarely stick to it long.'

"That was the principle—the governing code—of his life. That was why he was called 'The Bank of England Jockey,' and that was why he was trusted as the soul of truth and honour and uprightness! Without ever being sanctimonious, John was a God-fearing man—for many years a churchwarden. Mr. John and I maintained an unbroken friendship, and it fell out that I was very near him in many outstanding incidents in the latter days of his long life and probably in his thoughts when he died, for a few minutes before, so the late 'Ossy' Casebourne told me, John had asked him to read him an article of mine. Mr. 'Bob' Colling and I stood on each side of our old friend on the 'Trainers' stand at Newcastle when he won the Northumberland Plate with Mynora in 1912, and were the first to congratulate him. Again in 1914 when he won the same race with The Guller, I was close to him, he having asked me to 'read' the race for him. Then at the Gimcrack dinner that year we sat together and the dear old man said on discovering this, 'I'm so glad you're next to me. I don't see well, and you can stop those waiter chaps from filling up my glass every time I have a drink and you can also tell me what I'm eating' . . . No one who saw him at York could help but see the eye was dulled and the back more bent, and the familiar face more pinched, but he was so at grips with life we did not see that death was beckoning him. Yet suddenly—just as he wished it to be, without any lingering illness—among the animals and scenes and sounds he loved—the Pale White Horseman stole up and carried tenderly into that other room in God's house, this veteran hero of the Turf. His whole life was a preparation for the transition, translation—call it what you will."

I never meet his sons Fred and Philip, without recalling some story of their father, whose memory and friendship I cherish.

I have incidentally mentioned Mr. Matthew Dobson

Peacock in the appreciation of Mr. John Osborne. I have known him as long as I have known anyone on the Turf and nothing drew me more to him than his kindly manner towards Mr. Osborne. Mr. Peacock has now qualified for the title of veteran himself, and during 1934 was only well enough to put in one or two appearances on race-courses (and then only for part of the afternoon) at the commencement of the season. During the last twenty years he has softened and mellowed very considerably. Time was when he was not quite the gentle, quiet-mannered character which made him so lovable and so much more approachable to what may be termed the present generation of Turfites. His whole attitude seemed to alter, with this his face assumed a kindliness and a smile which was not found at one time. He became, as I have suggested, mellowed and if I may say so, humanised. At one time there was, if not a hardness in his expression, certainly a something which made him rather feared by those who were beginners, or hesitated inviting a snub. I don't say they would have got it, but at one time there was that in Dobson Peacock's manner which suggested the possibility. Maybe he took his profession and himself much more seriously in earlier years; maybe he was more anxious and worried; possibly he was pestered by "information hunters." Anyhow he seemed to completely change and to become one of the tenderest, most kindly and popular men on the Turf. Even his voice, his handshake, and the light in his eye, appeared to radiate warmth of heart. I have heard him talk to young jockeys as a father would talk to beloved children, and I happen to know of his affection for children, which, to me, is always a sign of a sweet nature, no matter how rough the exterior. One day, early in 1934, in the weighing-room at a north-country meeting I said "Good morning, Mr. Peacock" to Harry, younger son of the veteran Middleham trainer. Harry replied: "There is only one *Mister* Peacock." He was right in more senses than one. Truly there *is* only one Mr. Peacock. In another direction, too, there is only one "Mr. Peacock." Though the wizard of Middleham's Manor House has two trainer sons, neither of them has

quite the personality which characterises their father. It is not belittling to say this, nor is it impertinence, for both Matt and Harry are fully conscious of this fact and ready to admit it. They are both skilled men, both hard workers, both possessed of fine physique, albeit both are successful and acknowledged as sound judges of horses, form, and everything connected with the great Turf game into which they were born.

They lack, however, something of the *savoir vivre* which has made their father so universally beloved. In his younger days there was no more distinguished-looking man walked into a race paddock, or put on a silk jacket than Matthew Dobson Peacock. What is more, he possessed—as he still does—a certain dignity, carriage, presence and bearing, which, on the Turf, in the hunting field, or at the cattle market, singled him out amongst his fellows. He has always been a man at whom even the casual observer looked twice; a man who commanded attention, though actually most modest and retiring.

Essentially a ruralist, born on the land and loving it; a man robust in physique and outlook—outstanding traits of the Tyke—Dobson Peacock has long displayed a quiet kindliness, a consideration for others, which have set him apart from his more boisterous, self-assertive contemporaries and made him what he is—a natural gentleman. In him we have embodied the manners of a courtier, the sympathetic nature of a woman and the ungrudging helpfulness of a true friend, the tact of a diplomat, coupled with the hearty unpretentiousness of the rough-hewn dalesman—“the lusty lads and large of length,” described in *Marmion*—from which stock he springs. There is nothing, however, complex about his make-up. Always approachable, yea, even to importuning paddock pests (to whom he is courteous, if brief and ambiguous), it may be some time before one understands his true inwardness and appreciates all that is best in him, but for all that his nature is transparent. It is betrayed by the already mentioned smile and handshake, by the kindly sincerity in the tone of his voice, and the twinkle in those eyes—once so strikingly alert and always full of humour—now, alas, dimmed by increasing years and

ill-health. The Middleham veteran is not only a shrewd man, but he is one of even temperament and sound common sense. Years before Kipling he realised that peace of mind and content could only come

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much.

Sought after, flattered, lionised by the great of the earth, much in the limelight for many years, a Northern hero on a high pedestal, Dobson Peacock has through it all remained unspoiled, level-headed and modest. Too well does he know by long experience that trainers who are turning out many winners and jockeys who are riding them, only discover who are their real friends when the cycle of good luck has run its course and the lean time comes—as it eventually does to every trainer and jockey.

Mr. Matthew Dobson Peacock was born of agricultural parents at Harmby, a little village about a mile from Leyburn, and slightly further from historic Middleham—the Newmarket of the North. His birthday is always a standing joke with him, for it was on February 29th, 1856, that he first saw the light in his beloved Yorkshire. Hence his friends—and he has seen one generation of them pass—have only been able to honour his nativity on eighteen occasions during his long life. Mr. Peacock thus claims that he is only eighteen years old. Would that he could put back the clock.

Few men have witnessed so many changes on the Turf: first as an amateur rider, then as assistant with quaint old Harry Hall, the Middleham trainer, then as a trainer on his own behalf, later as a breeder of bloodstock and always, perhaps foremost, a farmer. I know that it is when on his home farm walking round his stock, his sheep and his crops that my old friend has spent his happiest hours. It is there he found real truth—truth in the Ruskin sense—rather than in the evanescent glamour of the Turf world. I fancy that his most joyous days in connection with racing departed when he himself became too heavy to ride.

Incidental mention has been made of Harry Hall. It was he who was responsible for Mr. Peacock embarking upon a Turf career, he who changed and shaped the whole course of the country lad's life, encouraged him in that innate love of horses and riding which is so inherently strong in the Yorkshireman, and gradually drew him from the land into the vortex of the great racing game in which he was such a power and ornament till ill-health came with increasing years.

A few words must be said here regarding this same Harry Hall, who is only a name to most of the present generation, for he died in 1896. Hall trained at Spigot Lodge, Middleham, which in recent years the Peacock family turned into a stud farm after Mr. "Bob" Colling left Yorkshire for Newmarket. At Spigot Lodge Mr. Harry Peacock commenced to train a couple of years ago. Harry Hall was a trainer of greyhounds at Hoddam Castle, in Scotland, before he turned his attention to race-horses. He was in a decidedly Turf atmosphere with Mr. William Sharp at Hoddam, for that sportsman was keen on racing as well as coursing, and Hall always used to say a man who could train greyhounds could also train race-horses. He proved the correctness of his statement too. Hall never entirely gave up his interest in long-tails, and at Middleham had two—Mocking Bird and Last Word—named after horses he had in his Spigot Lodge stables which were very useful. Harry was what is known in the North as a "character." He had a dry humour all his own, really loved horses and greyhounds, and was not only a judge of both, but also of humanity. He soon saw that the young Yorkshire country lad, Peacock, was not merely keen about horses, but also that he had ability in the saddle. Those were days when there were many more races on the flat for amateurs than is now the case, and it was in these events that Dobson Peacock as a young man began to show his mettle. It was Hall who gave him his first opportunities to ride in gallops and to learn something of the science of race-riding, and of those old practised hands who rode in races. A strong friendship sprang up between the lad and the older man which only ceased when old Harry Hall died full of years at

Middleham. A similar, and far more lengthy friendship, was that which existed between famous old John Osborne and Mr. Peacock. I sometimes think that the latter in some measure unconsciously moulded himself according to dear old John, whose courtesy, politeness and humility made him so generally beloved. Certain it is (and Dobson Peacock is always ready to acknowledge the fact) that Harry Hall and John Osborne had a great influence on his life and taught him much.

Although he served no regular apprenticeship to the racing game, and was never a professional jockey, Mr. Peacock, as has been shown, began his Turf education at an early age and in a good school. Reared in a district in which racing and hunting are two of the main themes of conversation, and the two greatest interests, he had the Yorkshireman's natural bent for both. Did not Black in his *Turf History* say : " In Yorkshire it is reasonably believed there has always been some kind of horse-racing from the earliest moment at which there were two horses and two Yorkshiremen in the county of Ridings ? " and did not " The Druid " (prince of sporting writers) ratify and supplement this when he wrote in *Post and Paddock* : " A blood horse has always been the idol of the Yorkshireman, who was the first to chronicle his deeds ; and attendance on his race-course levees is an honest and broad-bottomed custom which they will never resign."

These quotations give us some idea of the temper of Matthew Dobson Peacock, of his inborn love for blood-stock, for racing and for sport generally. Although the call of the land—his love for farming, sheep and cattle breeding—has never been eclipsed, he found himself, as the years went on, more and more drawn into the realms of " the great uncertainty," and more and more occupied with an ever-increasing string of horses. To-day, as an old man, he possibly has as many horses nominally under his charge as any other trainer, and more than most.

Fittingly enough it was at Catterick that Dobson Peacock rode his first winner. This was in 1877, and the horse was called Charlie Boy, whilst the owner was John

Osborne. The famous old jockey, then in his zenith as a trainer, had seen young Peacock (a lad in his 'teens at the time) ride on Middleham Moor and had also seen him going well with the Bedale hounds, with which John, and most of the Middleham trainers and jockeys of that day, regularly hunted. Moreover, John had seen Harry Hall's protégé ride at Catterick and elsewhere during the previous year, and had said, "he's good enough for me when I have anything I fancy." This first success of Mr. Peacock's is of sufficient interest to quote in full from the *Steeplechase Calendar* for the National Hunt season of 1876-7.

Catterick, April 5th, 1877. The North Riding Hunters' Steeplechase of 5 sovs each, 3ft to the fund, with £50 added; second to receive 10 sovs out of the stake, about three miles and a half (12 subs):

Mr. Osborne's Charlie Boy by The Miner,	
5 years, 11st. 8lb.	Mr. Peacock 1
Lord Castlereagh's Ballet Girl,	
5 years 12 st.	Mr. Willoughby 2
Mr. Young's Belinda, 6 years, 13 st.	Mr. R. Walker 3
Mr. T. Cordner's Anacreon, aged, 13st.	Mr. Couchman
Mr. W. Taylor's Vanquisher, 4 years, 13st.	Mr. Allen
5 to 4 on Ballet Girl, 2 to 1 agst Anacreon, 6 to 1 agst Belinda, 8 to 1 agst Charlie Boy. Won by a length and a half, a bad third. Anacreon refused.	

Charlie Boy's sire had the honour of having beaten the mighty Blair Athol at York, but this is not the only interesting point regarding Mr. Peacock's first Turf victory. When he went to scale there was some hitch about him riding, and Mr. Ford (father of the present judge, Mr. Stanley Ford) said: "I'm sorry, Mr. Peacock, but I can't pass you." Lord Castlereagh (afterwards Marquess of Londonderry) was one of the Stewards at the meeting and was standing near. He gave his permission for the disappointed lad to be passed, with the result that he beat his lordship's much-fancied and well-backed runner, Ballet Girl, ridden by Mr. Ernest Willoughby, who later became one of the best starters the Jockey Club ever had, and later still succeeded to the title of Lord Middleton. They often discussed this at Catterick races in after years,

and the late Lord Londonderry always used to laughingly remark: "It was a great mistake on my part allowing you to ride—but I paid for my mistake as I've paid for others on the Turf!"

Although this was Mr. Peacock's initial Turf triumph he had ridden winners in jumping competitions in the show ring, his most important being so early as 1873 when he won a big event at Belle Vue, Manchester. At that period he only weighed 6 st., but he was tall and was putting on weight.

He was soon in much demand to ride in amateur races both on the flat and over hurdles, and won his share of these, always riding long and having the reputation (as a great mutual friend and contemporary horseman of his put it to me) of "riding a nice quiet race, never losing his head, always bold, and generally nursing his horse with such skill and judgment that he could pull out a little bit extra when it came to a finish." It was this which once enabled him to beat Jack Watts a head in a great race at Derby when amateurs were allowed to compete with professionals.

One of the secrets of his success throughout his long career on the Turf has been that he has never thought he "knew it all." He has always been ready and anxious to watch and learn from others. He has ever been a good listener, and has profited by the experience of the great men—for there were giants on the Turf in his young days—with whom he had the privilege of claiming friendship when at last he started as a trainer on his own behalf with about three horses. Eventually he succeeded his old mentor Harry Hall and, in due course, went to the picturesque old Manor House at Middleham, to the stabling at which he has time and time again had to add, in addition to having horses in yards all over Middleham.

It is said, and there is some truth in it, that patrons follow each other to trainers who are turning out winners. But there is another reason why the Manor House stables at Middleham have, in recent years, been full to overflowing. It is not merely the skill of Middleham's Wizard, not merely his own popularity, not alone the innumerable successes which have come his way, or that Stewards of

the Jockey Club and many of the highest in the land have entrusted their horses to him, but also that during all these long years there has never been one breath of suspicion upon Dobson Peacock doing anything on the Turf which was not straight, honest and above board, and that he has not taken horses owned by men with an "if" about them. I know him well enough after a friendship of a quarter of a century, to say with certainty that if anyone had dared to suggest to him that he should run a horse "down the course," attempt to deceive either the public or the handicapper, or place his own, or the character of one of his jockeys in jeopardy, such person would have been told to take his animals away at once. The name of Matthew Dobson Peacock, like that of his beloved old friend, John Osborne, has always stood for that which is honest and of good report on the Turf. He has lived to see not a few who tried their hands at "sharp practice" come to their undoing, and has always congratulated himself on having been reared in a different school, and upon having patrons who were gentlemen and sportsmen.

A big stable of horses inevitably means a big staff, no small amount of clerical work, a heavy daily correspondence, constant thought and anxiety day and night, endless supervision and incalculable administrative work. Not only has a trainer with a huge stable like Mr. M. D. Peacock to concentrate on the present, but his mind must always be centred on the future. He has an immense amount of detail to attend to—entries, forfeits, scratchings, arrangements for horses' journeys to fill their engagements, decisions as to which jockeys are to ride them, the commissariat department both as to fodder and the feeding of the staff, payment of wagers, making out of accounts for owners, and so on.

It has always been Mr. Peacock's plan to give all his apprentices who show any aptitude at all, a chance to ride in races. Since he has been a trainer he has had scores of boys apprenticed to him whose ambition was to become jockeys, and whom he was only too anxious should achieve that ambition. Successful apprentices are often the best horses in the stable, for, of course, their

master materially benefits by the fees paid for their services. The experience of the Middleham veteran is that of most trainers—that only about three per cent of the boys apprenticed ever make even second-class jockeys. The boys either grow too heavy, have seat without hands, or hands without brains. If they possess these essentials they may lack the necessary dash and courage to “come through” and win, or to keep their ground round awkward turns. Probably the really good jockeys who passed through the Manor House school during the long reign of Middleham’s Wizard as head-master, would not require more than the fingers on one’s two hands to count.

There are some trainers who are not masters of the situation insomuch as their patrons insist on having “fashionable” apprentices on their horses when they are “claiming the five.” In this respect Mr. Peacock has generally been entrusted with the selection of jockeys and so his own boys have had abundant opportunities of showing their mettle, gaining experience, and making good if it was in them.

Year by year the calls upon his time, his nervous energy, his thought and skill have increased till, with a hundred horses under his charge, his stud, his farm, and other interests, his daily task has been an inestimable drain on his vitality. Indeed, had he not had the assistance of his son, Matt—a man of tireless energy, possessed of wonderful organising powers, the ability to control men, and a man with no other thought or interest than his duty to his father and the patrons of the stable—he could not have carried on. Years of continuous strain have told upon the Middleham Wizard and if we analyse a typical day’s work when he is at home on a non-racing day the *raison d’être* may be understood. Up at cock-crow, out on a hack on Middleham Moor directing the work of the first string to go out, taking mental stock of the way they move, home to breakfast and to tackle a heavy correspondence, sending off telegrams in reply to letters demanding an immediate answer, out on the moor with the second lot, answering telephone calls, studying the morning’s sporting papers and the *Racing Calendar*,

then going round the stables. Mr. Peacock has always made it his boast that he has made every horse sent to him an individual study. Here are his own words on this subject at the end of his best season :

“Part of the secret of our success has been the wonderful condition of our gallops the going on which has been excellent all the season. Then we believe in good feeding. If you want to get the best out of horses you’ve got to put the best into them. If feeding them on golden sovereigns would make them win races they should have them—if I could get them. I personally superintend the feeding when at home, and I’ve always made a close study of every horse and worked them according to what goes into their mangers, with, of course, exceptions—those gross animals which put on flesh whatever you do, and the bad doers, shy feeders and ‘funky’ sort, which take a lot out of themselves because of their temperament. Some horses may leave a clean manger though they’re getting eight bowls of corn a day, others will only eat six, some—and they together with bad legged horses are the worry to a trainer—can’t be induced to clean up their mangers. They have to be tempted and perhaps given small feeds at odd times, or specially treated. I am very keen on sunshine grown foods and unfortunately most of the fodder grown in this country doesn’t contain enough of what I call ‘bottled sunshine.’”

Now to continue the analysis of a typical day in Mr. Peacock’s life in the period of his full activity prior to the middle of 1934. Say he had only sixty horses in his boxes and suppose that he only spent three minutes with each—feeling its legs, running his hand over it to find its muscular condition, and if it had been “strapped” in accordance with the Manor House standard, then asking about its manger. Well, that is exactly three hours’ work. Then there are letters to write and dictate, account books to attend to, visitors to see, more telephone calls to answer, form to study, entries for races to make, a walk round the stud farm and it is time for evening stables again. Maybe an owner has turned up to see his horses, or the veterinary surgeon has been sent for to see some ailing animal (though both Mr. M. D. Peacock and Matt have had so much experience that they are skilled amateur “vets”). After evening stables they may have

to set off on a long journey to some distant meeting at which they had runners on the morrow. After the opening of the 1934 season, Mr. M. D. Peacock left these tiring journeys to his son Matt, and even when he attended fixtures nearer at hand to his home, prior to July, he left before the last race. Indeed, at the 1934 Newcastle Spring meeting, he did not put in an appearance in the paddock at all on the first day, though staying at an hotel not far from Gosforth Park. For years he has worked at high pressure, and though a man of even temper, having himself so disciplined and under control that the strain of the "great uncertainty" has affected him less than it has many men, he has still taxed his human machine far higher than he has ever taxed the best stayer he ever trained.

Although never a heavy gambler himself and fortunate in having patrons who in the main have raced for sport, Mr. Peacock has week by week during the flat season had his nerves at high tension and this tells in the long run on the most robust men.

I have referred to the amount of correspondence and book-keeping trainers with a string of the size Mr. Peacock has for some years had, are compelled to deal with. Most of them find it necessary to employ a secretary thoroughly versed in the technical side of racing. By this I mean pedigrees, closing dates for entries for forthcoming races, final dates for forfeits, scratchings, ordering boxes for runners at meetings, and so on. Just as Mr. Peacock has been fortunate in having his son Matthew to help in looking after the practical side externally, and Harry to manage the stud, he has been equally fortunate in having a daughter who has assisted him with the internal economy of a big training establishment and with the administrative and clerical work. No matter how clever a trainer may be with his horses, failure to observe to the hour the conditions governing races, may make all his skill of no avail, or at best run his patrons into considerable unnecessary expense. Mr. Peacock has in recent years been relieved by his daughter of much of the tedium of office work which most trainers find so irksome. Nevertheless as "it is the



Left to right MR M D PEACOCK MR VIATT PEACOCK AND THEIR PATRON MR LIONEL DUGDALE
Courtesy of 'Yorkshire Herald'

master's eye which makes the horse fat," so the Manor House Master has had to keep his finger on the pulse of his establishment both inside and out.

The Wizard of Middleham has always considered Gosforth Park one of the best race-tracks in the country, and also one of his most lucky courses. As has already been remarked, his mentor, Harry Hall, preferred running horses at Gosforth to anywhere else, and Mr. Peacock's affection for the meeting began in those far-off days when he was assisting Hall. There are many trainers who are superstitious, many who believe that luck plays a considerable part in the Turf game, whilst most of them are convinced that their star is always in the ascendant at certain fixtures. Certainly Peacock has had ample grounds for this belief in connection with Newcastle's ancient meeting.

Whilst it has always been his ambition to train a Derby and St. Leger winner, he was reared in a school which held the Northumberland Plate in high estimation. "The Pitman's Derby," as it is called, stands out as a cameo in the sporting calendar of the North. What the St. Leger is to Yorkshire the Northumberland Plate is to those in Northumberland and Durham. There is a wealth of tradition associated with the event, a certain honour and distinction accruing to owner, trainer and jockey, which is greater than the rich prize attached to it.

I have heard North-country owners, to whom sport, *qua* sport, is of more account than the commercial side of the Turf, confess they would rather win the St. Leger or the Northumberland Plate than the Derby. There is a local patriotism as well as a national patriotism and it is the former which has placed the Northumberland Plate on the pedestal on which it stands.

No trainer has had the success in connection with this Newcastle event which has fallen to Peacock, for he has had the proud lot of saddling six Plate winners. The first of these was in 1904, when Palmy Days, owned by Mr. J. G. Baird Hay, won. Palmy Days had won her two last races the previous year (the final being the Liverpool Cup), with "Tiny" Heppell in the saddle, and she had a big following in the North for the Plate.

Five years later came Sir Harry's victory in the Northumberland Plate. He was owned by the late Mr. D. J. Jardine (Peacock's earliest and staunchest patron), and though he had not won a race that year (nor did he win another in 1909) he started favourite at 5 to 2, and won in a decisive manner by six lengths. Otto Madden, who was riding a good deal for Peacock about this time, had the mount in a field of eleven. There was good reason for Sir Harry starting favourite, for Peacock had thought he had a very good chance in the Ascot Stakes exactly a week before. For this event Sir Harry was also made favourite, but was not even placed. Now in the Ascot Stakes Mr. Jardine's horse carried 8 st. 4 lb. and Mr. J. A. de Rothschild's Laughing Mirror (second in the race) carried a stone less. In the Northumberland Plate Sir Harry was set to give Laughing Mirror 2 lb. more than was the case at Ascot, the respective weights being 8 st. 7 lb. and 7 st. 5 lb.

Madden confessed to Mr. Peacock at Ascot that he ought to have won, and begged to be allowed to have the mount in the big Gosforth Park event. Although bitterly disappointed with the Ascot running, Madden's frankness regarding having ridden a bad race at Ascot and his conviction that he could win at Newcastle together with Mr. Peacock's desire not to injure his reputation as a jockey, resulted in Madden again having the mount. The owner when consulted gave his trainer an entirely free hand as to engaging a jockey for Sir Harry and so Madden's request was acceded to. The result was that the Middleham horse beat Laughing Mirror in such a hollow manner that the Newcastle Stewards were bound to take notice of this complete reversal of form within seven days. The official statement of what transpired is thus recorded in the *Racing Calendar* :

"Subsequent to the running of the Northumberland Plate the Stewards of the Jockey Club called upon Madden to explain his riding of Sir Harry at Ascot. They also interviewed Peacock, the trainer of the horse. Madden said he was tied down by waiting orders and that if he had been allowed to ride the horse as he did in the Northumberland Plate he would

have won. This statement was not borne out by Peacock's evidence, as he informed the Stewards that he had not given waiting orders, and that he and Mr. Jardine were very much dissatisfied with Madden's riding at Ascot. They therefore reprimanded him and strongly cautioned him as to his future conduct."

In 1923 came the victory of Carpathus for the Middleham stable, this being the third winner of the "Plate" Mr. Peacock had trained. At that period the ill-fated Jimmy Ledson was the stable jockey and he it was who steered what was essentially a local winner, for Carpathus was owned by a Newcastle lady in the person of Mrs. J. Watts.

Carpathus was bred by Mr. John Watts and was a son of the Derby winner Lemberg. In the Northumberland Plate Mrs. Watts' horse just managed to beat another Northumbrian horse—the late Mr. Adam Scott's Jazz Band, which, half a length away, was second. The following year Jazz Band atoned by winning the Plate and it is interesting to record that both these animals later stood at Mr. Peacock's Spigot Lodge Stud at Middleham.

Prior to concluding his career on the Turf, Carpathus left his mark not only upon it but also upon Arthur Waudby, who for several years has been the National Hunt jockey connected with the Peacock stable, and is now virtually head-man. Waudby ("Yorky" as he is known on the Turf) is the son of an ex-huntsman, and believes in hard work to keep himself fit. Unlike many jockeys of to-day he is not merely willing but keen to "do" a horse, and takes a pride in strapping a thoroughbred and turning it out as it should be. Well, "Yorky" Waudby "did" Carpathus—a highly strung, rather than a nasty tempered horse. One day when he was dressing the "Plate" winner over in his box, Carpathus savaged him and bit the end off a finger.

Border Minstrel in 1927 was the next Peacock "Plate" winner. He was owned by the late Mr. Alfred Hood, a cotton merchant who lived at Rossett, near Chester, and who didn't embark upon his Turf career till he had retired from business. Border Minstrel had won the

County Cup at Ayr on his owner's sixty-fourth birthday, and when he won the Northumberland Plate Mr. Hood declared that he was the happiest man in England although he hardly ever had a bet. When Border Minstrel's racing days were over I saw him at the Stockwood Stud, near Redditch. He was looking a picture and, owned by the Hillman family, got some very useful hunter stock.

In 1928 the Middleham stable again provided the Northumberland Plate winner in Primrose League, which carrying 7 st. 6 lb. won in the colours of a comparatively new-comer to the Turf in the person of Mr. J. Graeme Thompson, a South Shields contractor, builder and picture-house owner, who had the proverbial "beginner's luck" on the Turf. He accomplished at his first attempt what many Northerners have spent a lifetime in trying to achieve—won the Pitman's Derby. Primrose League cost Mr. Thompson £1,000, being bought from a draft sent from Manton to the Newmarket sales. W. Nevett was the successful jockey, and in a thrilling finish beat S. Donoghue on Young Middleton by two lengths. Another useful "draft" horse acquired by Mr. Thompson was Portofino. Sired by Lord Derby's first Derby winner, Sansovino, he won one race as a two-year-old for the Stanley House stable. He was then sent to the December sales, where he was bought by Mr. Thompson for 1,150 guineas. High hopes were entertained in the North of a Middleham success in the Derby, but though Portofino won some good races for his owner, he was hardly up to classic form. Four years after Primrose League had won the same owner and trainer were again triumphant in the Northumberland Plate with Pommarel, by Pommern, so half-brother to Primrose League. Pommern, by the way, was a virtual triple crown winner, and it was not surprising Mr. Thompson should be keen on getting another of his offspring. He paid 500 guineas for the 1932 Plate winner as a yearling at Doncaster, and a very successful purchase it proved, for Pommarel won him four races in 1931 and then secured him his second "Plate" success.

On this occasion Mr. Peacock had two runners in the

big Northumbrian event—the winner, and Another Band, owned by his old friend Mr. Adam Boazman of Kelso, who has so long been a patron of the stable. Mr. Boazman is a very extensive sheep buyer all over Scotland, is keen on coursing, and is also a breeder of bloodstock. Many winners has Mr. Peacock turned out for him, and on this occasion Mr. Boazman had the services of the stable jockey W. Nevett, the “pocket Hercules,” Johnny Dines, having the mount on Pommarel. As it happened the stable provided the first and second in the event. Such is Mr. Peacock’s great record in this great North-country race. It is unlikely that it will ever be beaten.

As I have just said, one of the staunchest and oldest patrons of the Manor House stable (if not the first) was the late Mr. D. J. Jardine, whose dark green jacket and cardinal cap were so well known on the Turf. Only his death, in August, 1922, brought the long friendship and connection between the Scotch sportsman and his trainer to an end. For him Mr. Peacock had the pleasure of training three Cumberland Plate winners in addition to several other horses which won good races. The first of the Carlisle victories was in 1902, with Gardenhurst. This was the last but one Cumberland Plate to be run on the old course on The Swifts at Carlisle, and “Tiny” Heppell was the jockey who steered the long-priced winner. Gardenhurst had an easy task. He started at 100 to 8.

Gardenhurst later in the season carried off the Ayrshire Handicap (worth £1,000, or twice the then value of the Cumberland Plate) with Heppell again riding. There were 13 runners and Gardenhurst had not a quotation.

It was in 1908 that Dobson Peacock again saddled the winner of the Cumberland Plate, in Macedoine, also owned by the late Mr. D. J. Jardine. Macedoine had only 6 st. 2 lb. to carry, so the Middleham trainer had to find a lightweight jockey. He selected Charlie Ringstead, who had been apprenticed to Mr. W. Binnie of Malton, and who was then riding well. Although Mr. Jardine’s filly had done nothing that season to warrant it, so great was the confidence of her trainer in her that

she started favourite and won the Cumberland race by two and a half lengths.

At the subsequent Edinburgh meeting Macedoine, with J. Clark up, won the Edinburgh Gold Cup from Mr. J. Deuchar's Flower of the Veldt. At the same meeting Mr. Jardine's Sir Harry (G. McCall) won the Caledonian Hunt Cup, giving Melayr six pounds and a three lengths beating. Sir Harry had done well for the Middleham trainer and for his owner that season, for he cantered away with an Apprentice Plate at Pontefract, won the Londesborough Plate at York by twenty lengths (bad third), won at Carlisle, the Great Yorkshire Handicap at Doncaster, the County Cup at Ayr (betting 10 to 1 on), and the Caledonian Hunt Cup referred to. No wonder that Mr. Peacock considers Sir Harry one of the best and gamest horses he ever trained, and that the late Mr. J. McIntyre was glad to secure him for the Theakston Stud when his Turf career was at an end. Sir Harry later stood at his owner's place at Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire.

For Mr. Jardine, Mr. Peacock won a third Cumberland Plate in 1914 with Wardha, another useful animal. Ridden by Ledson he had won the Doncaster Three-Year-Old Handicap and was then kept for the Cumberland Plate, which was his real objective. Ledson had the mount and I remember Mr. Peacock saying in the weighing-room that unless he dropped down dead Wardha could not be defeated. Now it isn't often that the veteran trainer lets the world know his innermost thoughts. His horses are his patrons' and his own concerns, so are his opinions and expectations. On this occasion at Carlisle, however, he was confident even to communicativeness and Wardha justified his confidence. There were only half a dozen runners so that it was little wonder the Middleham horse started at 13 to 8 on.

The ill-fated Peter Jones had the mount on Wardha at the end of the season in the Manchester November Handicap. There were 21 runners, and Wardha, starting at 9 to 1, won easily. Poor Peter Jones met his death when riding for Mr. Peacock at Bogside in 1923. Maid of Middleham fell with him, but he felt well enough to

ride the late Lord Barnby's Monk of Blyth in the last race, which he actually won by a neck. On returning to scale, however, he felt ill, was removed to hospital at Ayr and died there during the night. He was the son of a Beverley gardener and brother to R. A. Jones, the jockey.

Other horses to carry Mr. Jardine's colours were Refractor, winner of the 1899 Royal Hunt Cup, and Gotha.

For a new patron of the stable, Sir E. Hanmer, Peacock won the 1929 Cumberland Plate with Pomagne, which, ridden by W. Nevett, won very easily. Sir Edward in 1921 had married a daughter of that good North country sportsman, the late Capt. J. E. Rogerson, who was so long Master of the South Durham Hounds, at one time an amateur rider, later Steward at, and a great patron of, Turf fixtures on the Northern circuit. Sir E. Hanmer in 1927 paid 1,500 guineas for Spionella (one of his first race-horses) but had better luck with Pomagne. His next outstanding horse was Gallini, with which Peacock at one time hoped to bring Derby honours to the North once more. The Epsom Classic has not been won by a North country horse since 1869, when Mr. John Johnstone's Pretender went from Middleham to triumph in the greatest Turf contest in the world.

Gallini, Sir Edward, his trainer and jockey all had the Fates against them. Here are Sir Edward's own words regarding the Derby :

"My horse was found to be lame when he reached the paddock at Epsom. The cause of the trouble was in the near fore-foot, due to plating. The front plates were removed and ordinary exercise shoes substituted. This eased him a little but he was still unsound. I decided to run him. He made all the running for one and a quarter miles, and when he got to the bottom of the hill after Tattenham Corner, he lost his off fore-shoe. As soon as this happened he naturally shortened his stride, the going being very hard ; but he battled on under difficulties, and finished close up fifth. It must be remembered that he was lame on his near fore-foot before the race, and that during the critical part of it

he lost his off fore-shoe. This was a gallant effort and had my horse been sound, I am sure he would have fought out the finish with Cameronian. Gallini ran in the Irish Derby, in which he broke down, having sprained a tendon."

Here is Peacock's statistical record for the past eleven years :

Year	Number of races won	Value £
1924	29	6,649
1925	29	10,746
1926	47	11,445
1927	54	17,543
1928	49	11,718
1929	46	12,661
1930	69	18,882
1931	98	22,803
1932	100	30,742
1933	78	16,937
1934	89	22,624
	<hr/> 688	<hr/> 182,750

There was great rejoicing in 1932 when Mr. Peacock turned out his century of winners (as the late W. E. Elsey had done years before from Baumber), and he was congratulated by all ranks of racing enthusiasts. In 1931, he had a most successful time on the Autumn Scottish Circuit fortnight, and incidentally was presented to H.M. the King at Edinburgh. Commencing at Ayr and ending at Hamilton Park, the Manor House horses won nineteen races. Although the horses trained by Mr. Peacock have for years won a fair share of really nice handicaps season by season, the classics and richly endowed races have so far eluded him. This is not in any way attributable to any lack of skill on the part of the veteran trainer, but is the result of the prevailing fashion of patrician owners sending their best horses to South country trainers. In the merry past, the gallops on Middleham and Richmond moors, the wolds at Malton and Hambleton Hills, re-echoed to the galloping

hoofs of some of the best performers in the land. In those days the North could more than hold its own in the classic events. Latterly the animals trained in the North have, with a few exceptions, been mediocre.

Amongst the "big" events which have fallen to Mr. Peacock's charges apart from those to which reference has been made are the Chester Cup and the Cambridgeshire, both of which went to Middleham in 1932. The first mentioned race Mr. Peacock won with Bonny Brighteyes, which started at the outside odds of 20 to 1. The winner was owned by Mrs. Robinson, a sister of Sir Ernest Tate, the sugar magnate, who has for long trained with Mr. Peacock. Bonny Brighteyes, the previous season, had won the Auchincruive Handicap at Ayr and the Caledonian Hunt Cup at Edinburgh. It was with the same owner's Pullover that Mr. Peacock won the Cambridgeshire, and never was the glorious uncertainty of racing more strikingly manifested than in this race. So lightly were the chances of the daughter of Twelve Pointer (himself a winner of the same race) regarded, that Mr. Peacock did not undertake the long journey to headquarters to see him run. Matt took Pullover and Simonside to the meeting, the latter being considered as something in the nature of a "good thing." He was, however, beaten by Loosestrife, while Pullover, which was allowed to start at the long odds of 100 to 1, won the big handicap. Nineteen years elapsed after Wardha had won the "Manchester November" before Peacock again saddled the winner of the last big handicap of the flat season. Jean's Dream was the winner of the 1933 big race at Manchester and with her Peacock won many good races for his old friend, Mr. Adam Boazman.

Two years previously Peacock had won "half" a Manchester Cup with Sir L. Parkinson's Redeswood, which dead-heated with North Drift—a horse which showed his partiality for the Castle Irwell track by winning the "November" a few months later. In 1932, another Manor House horse, Sir Ernest Tate's Denbigh, was also involved in a dead-heat in another important race—the Liverpool Autumn Cup, in which he shared the spoils with China King. The following year Denbigh

won the race outright. At York in 1923 we saw one of Mr. Peacock's horses beat the Derby winner, Papyrus, in the Duke of York Stakes. This was Craig Eleyr. Despite this wide course and the fact that there were only four runners the finish was a scrimmaging one and no one was surprised when Donoghue, who rode Papyrus, lodged an objection against the Middleham horse. The York Stewards upheld the objection and awarded the race to Papyrus. The owner, Mr. A. H. Straker, appealed to the higher tribunal, the Stewards of the Jockey Club, who, however, also gave their verdict in favour of Mr. Ben Irish's colt.

For many years Mr. Peacock has been interested in bloodstock breeding and many prospective winners have had their first canter in the Manor House paddocks at Middleham. It was quite thought at one time that 1922 was to set the seal of fame on his stud and that it was to be credited with having produced a Derby winner in Re-echo (by Neil Gow). At the Doncaster yearling sales, the late Mr. P. P. Gilpin bought the colt for 2,600 guineas on behalf of Sir Ernest Paget. Mr. Gilpin, writing to Mr. Edward Moorhouse, said :

"I was very much attracted by the colt directly I saw him. He was one of the best turned out yearlings I have ever seen. Indeed I thought after I had bought him, I should be fortunate if ever I had him looking as well again. He reflected the greatest possible credit upon the management of the Manor House Stud at Middleham."

Re-echo was very much fancied for the 1922 Derby, and Gilpin was convinced that he had the winner in his stable in either St. Louis or the Middleham bred colt. However, Re-echo got a bad start, and so only finished eighth in the race, won by Captain Cuttle. Some compensation was forthcoming when Re-echo won the 1922 Cambridgeshire.

But I must stay my hand. Some day a whole volume will be devoted to the Middleham trainer, his life, successes and stud. It ought to be done now. This is only a brief summary of the career of a great trainer, a great sportsman and a great friend.

Capt. Jack (now Sir John) Renwick told me scores of

times that he infinitely preferred hunting to racing and latterly I think he got more bored than ever with the same old routine in the paddock. He gave up training when his father died and has not been on a race-course since. I fancy the same may be said of Capt. Percy Bewicke, another Northumbrian, who retired from active Turf pursuits a couple of years before Sir John. In a way the careers of the two were bound up together for Capt. Bewicke was training in Northumberland when Capt. Renwick began his career. I am inclined to think it was the activities of Capt. Bewicke which made Sir John take up a Turf career. I remember once when he motored me from some race meeting or other through Newcastle-on-Tyne, he pointed out to me the offices in which he began life as an office-boy. He told me that his duty first thing in a morning was to go to the post office for the mail bag and added that he hated the confinement of the office and longed for an open air life. His father, Sir George, was a plain Northumbrian, a loveable old man, who loved the burr which left no doubt as to his locality. Years before Sir John started to train, so Sir Lycett Green himself told me, his father (Sir Edward Green) said quite definitely to him: "Lycett, either go in for racing, or for hunting—not both!" So Sir Lycett chose the 'chase and only occasionally had a ride or a horse running under N.H. rules till his hunting days were over, then he began racing in earnest. Now Sir George was equally opposed to his son "mixing" it, and when the Captain took the Mastership of the Goathland Hunt—a small Yorkshire moorland pack—I received a wire from Malton asking me to announce that Capt. Renwick was merely to act as amateur huntsman and that a committee were to act as Masters. I fancy Sir George saw no difference between Mastering the Quorn or the Goathland and Staintondale, of which latter pack Sir John was for some years both huntsman and joint Master. Very good he was too, over the rough moorlands and, using Border Hounds, he built up quite a useful hill pack. He was really keen on hunting, a good judge of hound (and of a yearling too!), albeit a good sportsman and a good fellow, who

only needed £20,000 a year to have given everyone of his friends a good time. A more generous man never lived, or a more likeable one, but he was always handicapped because some of his patrons didn't pay and left him to shoulder the burden of big forage and travelling accounts and lads' wages. He once told me that one man alone owed him £3,000 for training fees and expenses. No one, of course, can carry on a training establishment on these lines without endless financial worry and difficulty. Even when he had such a "relieving officer" in his stable as Stolen Kiss, Capt. Renwick did not benefit much. Some trainers would have feathered their nests for life but none of the Renwicks betted more than an odd sovereign or two and it is possible to make Turf figures add up right without doing so. Some make them add up much more satisfactorily when they *do* bet.

Captain J. R. Renwick is what I would describe as an "all rounder." He loves a game cock, the gun, hounds and horses, and when at Malton everything about his place was pedigree. I believe it is the same at his place at Bellingham in Northumberland, whither he has retired to a pastoral life. His brother, Major W. Renwick, who also took up training after the war, and followed Captain Sawrey Cookson at Richmond, has also retired to his native county, leaving his son Aubrey to continue the Renwick Turf tradition. Sir John was born November 13th, 1877, and is the eldest son of the late Sir George Renwick, Newminster Abbey, Morpeth, of Tyneside shipping fame. It was in his father's office that, as has already been stated, he was launched upon what was intended to be an entirely different career to that which he eventually adopted. The passion for horse and hound proved too strong for him and the spark which glimmered within him for the outdoor life amidst the congenial spirits of the race-course and hunting field and amongst horses and hounds was fanned into flame by the boyhood days which he had had with the Morpeth and neighbouring packs. Later he was brought into close contact with Captain Bewicke and others who were prominent in connection with the Turf and chase. During the South African War he served with the



CAPT SIR JOHN RENWICK

Northumberland Fusiliers and was given a commission in the 17th Lancers. In 1905 he set up as a trainer in Northumberland, but moved to Dunbar and after three years there he went to historic Whitewall at Malton (made famous by the innumerable classic triumphs of the Scotts), which his father had purchased. Upon the outbreak of war Captain Renwick served with an Ammunition Column in the Northumbrian R.F.A. Brigade, Whitewall being closed down. His D.A.C. was noted for the condition of its horses and teams of grey mules. When hostilities ceased Captain Renwick remained in the army for some time to assist in the demobilisation of horses, but in 1920 the Whitewall boxes began to fill again and Captain Renwick quickly picked up the broken threads and was soon sending winners out for his patrons.

He had only a few horses when he decided to give up training on the death of his father in 1931. Since then famous Whitewall at Malton has stood empty, and in 1934 was sold to a building speculator, so that it will never again shelter a race-horse.

For one trainer who gives up there seem to be half a dozen new ones to take their place. Indeed there are too many trainers endeavouring to eke out a living with three or four bad horses. One of the most recent additions to the list is the Master of Gray, heir to the ancient Barony of Gray, who followed that good horseman and great horse lover, Captain Charles Reynard (now connected with pony racing) as private trainer to Lady Lindsay in Scotland. He is a kinsman of the Earl of Lindsay, M.F.H., the latter of whom is much keener on hunting than on racing. The Master of Gray—Captain the Hon. Lindsay Stuart Campbell-Gray—after about five years at Kilconquhar, Fife, managing Lady Lindsay's horses, took out a licence and set up as a public trainer at Stoughton, Sussex, in 1935, having taken the quarters at which D. Thirlwell and H. Turner used to train.

Born in 1894, and educated at Eton and Oxford, the Master of Gray served with the Royal Artillery, 1914-19, was awarded the M.C. and was mentioned in despatches. He was A.D.C. to the Governor of Nigeria, 1924-25 and has always been keen on polo and steeplechasing.

There are some men, into whose company we are thrown week by week on the Turf, whom we like, some whom we like and respect, some who amuse us, some whom we avoid as nuisances, a few whom we love as brothers. The *personnel* of the racing world, our individual estimate of values, and attitude towards the units, is very much a repetition of our school days. We have our heroes, our bosom companions and our *bête noirs*. Paddock personalities of a truth form a microcosm, albeit a transient microcosm in which the human stars are ever changing—appearing and reappearing in varying brilliance, or fading into oblivion. One of those who were (by those who still remember him on his occasional visits to his old haunts) and still are really beloved is the veteran Robert Inchbold Robson. I have stayed with him often, eaten and drunk at his most hospitable table, long had his intimate confidence. I therefore know him as few men have known each other since the days of Boswell and Johnson. To me “Bob” Robson has always typified all that is truest, best, most sporting and truly honourable on the Turf. I don’t think he ever did a mean action even to those who traded on his good nature and generous heart, and it is his boast that he never told anyone a lie in connection with racing. There are times when it is justifiable to depart from the strict pathway of truth, especially when the interests of others are involved, and when the shameless, irrepressibly curious probe into stable secrets. Bob Robson, however, could not bring himself to prevaricate to even these, or to adopt the easier course taken by some of telling information hunters to “go to H— and mind their own business.” I have before me a big file of letters written to me during the past quarter of a century by Robson. They are all about horses and training methods, and all of them are stamped with his intense love of horse, hounds and sport. Let me quote one or two of these letters and supplement them with some extracts from my diary. In a letter just after he had given up training after the death of his chief patron, Mr. R. C. Vyner, Robson wrote :

"I have trained hundreds of horses but never had one costing £300 in my life. No one ever gave £2,000 and sent me an animal of that class, so I think I may be well satisfied with my method of training in view of the total number of winners I turned out. If I had had the valuable horses some trainers have had, I too might have won some big races. Many of those I have trained were good honest animals and I loved them. Sweet Hope, Count Oso and Boss Croker, were at Newmarket for two years and never won races. Of course Folkestone was full of dope when I got him and I did not know this for years afterwards. He cost his owner £800 in expenses. When with me Boss Croker won £700 at Thirsk. His owner had £800 to £100 about him. Boss Croker had a club foot of which I was always afraid but I went to lead him in at York thinking he had won the Flying Dutchman Handicap, but found he had been beaten a head. His foot had gone and he was so lame it was three weeks before I could get him home. Chapeltown came to me from Newmarket, never having won a race. She must have won quite thirty races after I got her. Misrule and Marden also won many for me, as did Lewis for which I gave £10. I sold him to Mr. W. F. Lee (a very old friend of mine against whom I often rode and who was later handicapper) for £100. He was supposed to be a mad horse but always went kindly for me. I never knocked horses about or allowed any of my lads to be rough with them. They soon get to know, that is if they are not too soured already, or are really wrong in their heads as some few are. I remember the first race I won on Lewis was on the old course at Wetherby. My old pal Charlie Cunningham—what a great horseman he was and what a lot of tussles we had together—brought a horse called Larry Holmes from Kelso. When we were dressing Cunningham asked, 'What are you riding, Bob?' I told him and he said, 'I'm certain to beat you, I gave £400 for mine.' 'I gave a tenner for mine,' I replied, 'but I'm certain to beat you unless your superior jockeyship does the trick.' Charlie had £600 to £400 on his. I took £200 to £60 about mine and won by half a length and could have won by much further if I had liked. Charlie could not help but laugh though he was furious at being beaten by a £10 horse. With Halutos, which was bought for £5 out of a hawker's cart, I won three races. Halutos had shown good form in Ireland and they nearly always reproduce it but he had broken down. Driving him about on the road had got him sound again. Here are the prices which I paid for some of the horses with which I won a lot of races: Young Lochinvar,

£250, King Stork, £250, Ravenscliffe (should have won the National), £205, Marsden Rock, £150, Misrule, £90, Chapel-town, £60, Count Oso, £60, Sweet Hope (a present), Melrose, £60, Little Buttercup, £80, Lewis, £10, Halutos, £5, Barugh, £50, Costello, £30. I wonder if any other trainer won so many races with horses at the same figure as I did with the above. I had only three horses in all my time which did not win races."

Apropos Folkestone, the Hon. G. Lambton says in his book *Men and Horses I Have Known* :

"The first horse I doped was a chestnut gelding called Folkestone. The horse had refused to do anything in a trial or in a race. He was always last. I first of all doped him in a trial. He fairly astonished me, for he jumped off in front and won in a canter. I sent him to Pontefract, where he beat a field of fourteen very easily, and nearly went round the course a second time before his jockey could pull him up. He won a race again the second day, and never won a race after."

This, of course, was in 1903, before doping was illegal, and the Hon. G. Lambton told his brother (Lord Durham) that he was adopting this course to open the eyes of the Jockey Club.

Here is an entry in my diary regarding later events :

"Bob Robson said to me to-day at Thirsk races, 'I had to buy a horse for Mr. L. Beaumont and gave 125 guineas for Folkestone after he had won at Ponty! I would have gone to 300 guineas never dreaming that a horse from a stable like Mr. Lambton's would be doped. I never won a race with the horse, and was a very unlucky man to unsuspectingly buy him. He ran third in a Maiden Hurdle at Wetherby in 1904, and next ran in a handicap hurdle at Hexham. Harry Taylor rode him and he jumped over the rails. I expected to see both horse and jockey killed. It cost Mr. Beaumont over £500 in training fees and bets, and did me harm as a trainer, for naturally people said, "Mr. Lambton can win races with the horse, why can't you?"'"

A brilliant amateur rider in his day, Robson was born at Great Ouseburn, Yorkshire, in 1853. Years ago, when agricultural shows were in their infancy, there were three brothers Robson in great demand as judges. They



MR. R. I. ROBSON

belonged to an old horse and sheep breeding, fox-hunting Border family (distantly connected with the famous trainer, R. Robson, who died, April 2nd, 1928), but their father had migrated to Yorkshire, and these three brothers each had big farms, one in the North, another in the East, and a third in the West Riding. The latter was William Robson, a prominent cattle dealer, a great judge, and a most successful farmer. He was friendly with the I'Ansons, the Pecks, and other Yorkshire trainers, and with hunting men in the county, but, though he loved hounds, he cared nothing for racing and counselled his son, Robert, to stick to the chase and have nothing to do with the Turf. "Bob," however, whilst always more enthusiastic about hunting than any other form of sport, and one of the straightest men to hounds Yorkshire has produced, drifted into racing, like many hunting men, by riding as an amateur. As time went on he turned trainer. When only eight he commenced to hunt with the York and Ainsty, and in his very early teens his father bought him a blood hunter which "Bob" found could go and which he decided to run and ride at York, where, in those days, there was a steeplechase meeting. So, when sixteen, he got his father's housekeeper to make him a set of colours—the primrose and violet jacket which, in later years, was to be known on steeplechase courses all over the North. On his way to ride his first race he saw his father's phaeton approaching in the distance, and, as his parent knew nothing of this initial Turf venture, "Bob" had to hide in a sand-pit till the phaeton had passed. After being away at school, R. Robson settled down to farm an extensive Wolds holding. Whilst there he came into contact with his father's old friends, the I'Ansons, and was much with them learning the art of training. Having spent many boyhood hours with the late Colonel R. F. Meysey-Thompson (also known as a gentleman jockey), and his brother, Lord Knaresborough, he was selected from thirty-three applicants when a 400-acre farm, Grass Gills, on their estate became vacant. The rental was £800 per year when R. Robson took it, 1884, but though it was in excellent condition when he left, in 1894, there

was only one applicant notwithstanding the fact that the rent was reduced £200 per year.

The intervening period had been a disastrous one for agriculturists. Almost as soon as he took Grass Gills R. Robson (who had ridden his first winner, Spider, at Wetherby the previous year) laid down an excellent steeplechase course of three miles, with only two turns in it, and welcomed cavalry officers quartered at York, who came to ride their horses over his fences. He thus came in touch with some of the most expert gentleman riders of that day. In 1894 Robson bought Branton Court estate, Farnham, near Knaresborough, and commenced to train the late Mr. R. C. Vyner's jumpers, some of his own, and those of other patrons. I have personally known every North country trainer and owner for the last quarter of a century and can unhesitatingly say that none of them really loved horses and dogs more than "Bob" Robson. The animals under his charge were his friends. He is a bachelor, and they were his beloved children. I have seen him cry like a child when one of his horses was suffering and on those few occasions when one of them broke a limb or crocked up badly on the race-course. To no man do the lines more truthfully apply than to R. I. Robson :

The trust of all dumb living things he won,
He never knew the luck too good to share.
Now, though he will not ride with us again,
His merry spirit seems our comrade yet.

When he retired from training and left Branton Court he called his house "Ravenscliffe," after a game old horse which won him many races and for which a loose box was specially built, so that he might end his days in peace with his master, whom we all delight still to meet at York, Wetherby, and Ripon.

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